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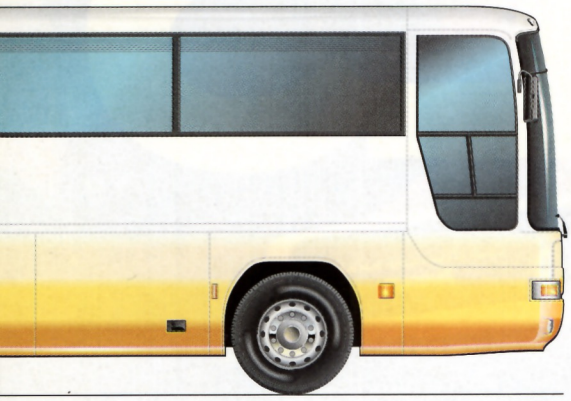

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BUSES

Volume 47 No 487
October 1995

REGULARS

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Reading Buses continues to update its fleet with new Optare products, such as this Delta, 513 (M513 PDP).
MICHAEL DRYHURST

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The Monopolies & Mergers Commission rears its head again this month as about the only form of 'regulator' for the bus and coach industry since the great 1986 free-for-all. It has reported on bus services in north-east England, which has specific reference to Stagecoach's infamous activities in Darlington.

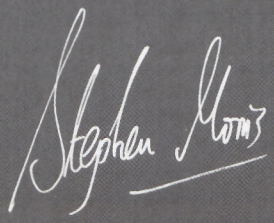
We've had our say on what happened in Darlington before; Stagecoach's audacious attack on Darlington was, we still maintain, within the letter of the law, and some might argue it was wholly within the spirit of the law — in the form of the 1985 Transport Act — too. We still can't accept that it was morally justified, and neither can the MMC. It has ruled that what Stagecoach did was not in the public interest; well, what Stagecoach did was certainly highly distasteful, though now that events are in the past the service its now provides to Darlington may very well be very much *in* the public interest, but perhaps that's a different question.

The recommendations of the MMC report are interesting. It comes as no surprise that Stagecoach has had the same smack on the wrists that Maidstone & District received for daring to fight back against the independents encroaching on its patch and not letting them into the Pentagon bus station in Chatham which it leases from the council. One wonders if Sainsburys in the same shopping centre will now be forced to give up 10% of its floor area to little grocer's shops in less prestigious parts of the Medway Towns.

But the recommendations for more general consumption are that other operators should not be allowed to register services in the area of a municipal operator when it is put up for sale, and that free, unregistered services, as run by Stagecoach in Darlington, should also be outlawed. Darlington wasn't the first local-authority operator to be destabilised when it was put up for sale; it happened at Maidstone, it happened at Lancaster and it could happen anywhere else. It seems sensible to offer them some sort of protection when they decide to sell up; though it seems a rather unmanageable way of doing it. And who knows, there may be the odd unscrupulous local-authority operator which could put itself on the market to stop other companies registering against them and withdraw later when the threat is passed! Well, all's fair in love and deregulation, isn't it?

Stagecoach may have got the rapped knuckles it deserved over Darlington, but despite the excellent reputation of its services in general, the way it is recasting services to create new links, its investment in attractive new buses, almost any move it makes seems to be deemed 'against the public interest'. It actually does an awful lot which is very much *in* the interest of the travelling public, but one could almost think the Government is waging a personal vendetta against it. Its takeover of Chesterfield Transport (see News) has been referred to the MMC; why not MTL's takeover of Gemsam, Yorkshire Traction's takeover of Yorkshire Terrier and Sheffield Omnibus — or British Bus's takeover of Maidstone & District, come to that.

Maybe one of Stagecoach's problems is it is so visible — you can hardly miss its buses after all. City investors apparently like to see their capital painted with stripes wherever they may be, from Inverness to Wellington, but it does give the company a very high profile. As FirstBus comes to grips with its policy on image it will have to weigh very carefully the relative merits of a high-profile, all-pervading livery to impress your investors and attract MMC attention, and something less obvious. One wonders if the Government has even noticed the spread of British Bus with its diverse liveries!



EDITOR

Editorial contributions

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We are also always very grateful to receive news items; those for the Fleet News sections should be sent direct to the relevant author at the addresses shown in those sections, and items of more general news should be sent to the editor.

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NEWS NEWS NEWS

this month's news stories

MMC reports on Stagecoach

The Monopolies & Mergers Commission has reported on bus services in north-east England ('The supply of bus services in the north-east of England', CM2933, HMSO, £23.75) following Stagecoach's fatal attack on Darlington Transport and accusations by smaller operators in Tyne & Wear of anti-competitive behaviour by Stagecoach and Go-Ahead Group.

The MMC has concluded that some actions of both groups were against the public interest and the Competition & Consumer Affairs Minister Jonathan Evans has accepted the MMC's findings. He is now seeking undertakings from both groups to maintain increased frequencies and reduced fares for three years after a competitor withdraws and not to operate services which do not cover their variable and semi-variable costs.

The MMC found that Stagecoach subsidiary Busways' actions in recruiting most of Darlington Transport' drivers, registering its services and running free services caused DTC's final collapse, although it accepts that DTC was already in a weak and declining position. It describes Busways' actions as 'predatory, deplorable and against the public interest'. It also concluded that Busways had threatened to force Hylton Castle Motors of South Shields off the road if it did not sell out, and that price reductions on competing service were predatory and against the public interest.

A similar conclusion was reached over Go-Ahead's response to competition from Classic Coaches, although cleared it of anti-competitive behaviour against Stanley Taxis in Co Durham.

The Department of Transport is currently reviewing deregulation; Steven Norris is leading a bus working group which is due to report shortly. The MMC recommends that the Secretary of State should consider a moratorium on the registration of competing services when a local-authority bus operator is put on the market and the there should be provisions to control unregistered free services.

Meanwhile Jonathan Evans has accepted undertakings from Maidstone & District following its report on services in Kent. M&D has undertaken not to run over another operator's tendered services, will allow other operators into the Pentagon bus station at Chatham, up to 10% of its capacity, will not drop fares selectively on services where there is competition and will maintain service levels introduced to counter competition after the other operator withdraws.

British Bus's acquisition of Caldaire Holdings is not to be referred to the MMC. Greater Manchester Buses North's acquisitions of the bus operations of Dalybus and Citibus Tours, MTL's acquisition of Gemsam and Yorkshire Traction's acquisitions of Yorkshire Terrier and Sheffield Omnibus have also been cleared.

Chesterfield passes to Stagecoach . . .

Another former municipal operator, Chesterfield Transport, has passed into Stagecoach ownership. Chesterfield Transport passed to the group on 28 July, following acceptance of the proposed takeover by more than 99% of Chesterfield's employee-owners. Management of Chesterfield Transport, which runs 163 buses and coaches, has passed to neighbouring Stagecoach company East Midland. Chesterfield's management team have all left and there have been 45 redundancies.

Chesterfield Transport's trading name is to be kept, but East Midland fleetnames are appearing on buses. East Midland Chesterfield-based buses are being moved into the Stonegravels depot, and Chesterfield's Retford & District operations pass to East Midland's Worksop depot.

Ten Volvo B10Ms have been moved from East London to replace older Chesterfield buses.

Former local-authority bus operators now in Stagecoach hands are Busways, Hartlepool Transport, Cleveland Transit, Kingston-upon-Hull City Transport, Grimsby-Cleethorpes Transport and Chesterfield Transport, while Stagecoach also operates services once provided by Barrow, Lancaster, Darlington and Cynon Valley.

Since the takeover Chesterfield's coaching subsidiary Whites of Calver has been sold on to Skills of Nottingham, which also took over East Midland's Midland Travel coach unit last year.

Not surprisingly the Monopolies & Mergers Commission has been directed to investigate the merger and report on it by 3 January.

. . . and Alpine to Crosville Cymru

The bus services of Alpine of Llandudno passed to Crosville Cymru on 23 July. Leyland Nationals and Mercedes-Benz minibuses of Crosville Cymru have appeared on former Alpine routes with Alpine fleetnames and red livery. Alpine's fleet latterly included eight double-deckers, eight single-deck buses (six Leyland Nationals and two Bedfords) and 10 minibuses, including two of the last Optare CityPacers built, as well as 18 coaches and a former Llandudno UDC Guy Otter.

British Bus subsidiaries have acquired a number of independent operators in their respective operating areas of late.

Kentish rationalisation

British Bus subsidiaries Maidstone & District, Kentish Bus and Londonlinks are all to move to a new head office at Armstrong Road, Maidstone. This was the former Boro'line headquarters which is being refurbished for the purpose and replaces M&D's head office at Luton Road, Chatham, and the Kentish Bus/Londonlinks Apex House in Dartford, both of which are to close by the end of October. Maidstone & District's. Luton garage is also to close, work moving to Gillingham. For Maidstone & District the move represents a reversion to its original town base, though in different premises.

Maidstone & District's Invictaway coaches to London are being painted in Green Line livery, though retaining the Invictaway name, and Kentish Bus's Kentish Express operation is also coming into the Green Line fold. Southend Transport's London services have already become Green Line, representing a British Bus-led revival of the Green Line image.

Maidstone & District services 306/8, Gravesend-Borough Green, passed to Kentish Bus from 21 August, with an extension to Sevenoaks giving the first link between Gravesend and Sevenoaks for many years. This and a new service 319 between Sevenoaks and Maidstone are operated by ex-R&I Dennis Darts of Kentish Bus, which carry a new livery of green and yellow, and this livery is expected to be extended to cover all Kentish Bus's operations outside London.

Rider's new names

Yorkshire Rider set up its new trading divisions on 1 September. It is understood that these are not as expected separate companies as such. The names are Leeds City Link, Bradford Traveller, Calderline (Halifax) and, somewhat obscurely, Kingfisher for the Huddersfield operations. Rider green is maintained while decisions are taken about FirstBus's policy on livery.

Guernsey monopoly removed

As countries throughout the world look to introduce more competition in their public transport services, following the great British example, Guernsey's parliament has removed the monopoly held by Guernseybus. It voted last January to award a third of the island's scheduled services to Island Coachways of St Peter Port, which has set up a Road Runner operation. It begins on 25 September.

Island Coachways has bought and refurbished nine used 25-seat Optare CityPacers and 31-seat Optare StarRiders for the six services which cover routes in the St Martin's Forest, Torteval and St Pierre du Bois parishes running in and through St Peter Port. Guernseybus retains services elsewhere on the island. Sixteen new staff have been taken on. Fare levels, which are controlled by the States Traffic Committee, are pegged for 12 months, and some subsidy is received from the States of Guernsey.

Don't forget Showbus!

Showbus takes place on Sunday 24 September at the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, and is sponsored by Exclusive First Editions, *Buses* and *Classic Bus*. Exclusive First Editions will be staging its EFE Showbus Show at the event. On display will be EFE's archive of models, including short-run specials, as will some of the wooden patterns used to create the moulds for the models. It latest casting will be unveiled and there will be special offers on a new release of its Bedford OB model in Premier Travel livery. There will also be two special models for the event.

Admission to Duxford is £6 for adults, £4 for adults and £3 for children, students and UB40 holders, with a family ticket (two adults and three children) at £17. All preserved buses will be entitled to three free passes, and the driver also gets in free, while other passengers arriving on buses will be able to get in for £3 per head. Well over 200 buses are expected on the day.

Corgi MBO

Corgi Toys completed a management buyout from American toy company Mattel on 7 August. The new company is called Corgi Classics Ltd.

WMT places major order

Further momentum has been given to the nationwide rise in new bus orders by the announcement in August that West Midlands Travel is to buy 150 Wright Endurance-bodied Volvo B10Bs worth £15 million, and has an option to buy another 150 thereafter. The 300 represents the biggest order placed anywhere in Europe for the B10B, and it is also Wright's biggest body order in its 49-year history. Wright's is increasing its workforce by more than 100 and extending its plant to keep up with demand for its bodies.

Joe Duffy, WMT's new managing director, said that the managing directors of the various WMT businesses in the West Midlands would have to compete for the new buses, though he stressed that double-deckers would still retain an important place in the company's operations. Despite the previous large order for single-deckers, 250 Leyland Lynxes, double-deckers still form the backbone of WMT's 1,700-vehicle fleet, and the 1,000-strong Metrobus fleet is currently being refurbished by Marshalls of Cambridge at a cost of £25,000 per vehicle at the rate of around four to five per week.

He pointed out that the order was the first placed by WMT since the merger with National Express which confounded the view that National Express regarded WMT as a 'cash cow'.

The B10Bs are to have Euro 2 engines a year ahead of legislation, and the 48-seat vehicles are to have eight tip-up seats around the front end to allow more space for standees at busy times and to create space for pushchairs etc. The order has gone to Volvo following excellent service provided by six Alexander-bodied Volvo B10Ms bought for evaluation at Wolverhampton in March 1986. These have proved to be the most reliable buses in the fleet and have only just had their brake shoes replaced for the first time. Joe Duffy suggested that patriotic considerations had swayed the previous order in favour of the Lynx, though apparently they have settled down to be quite reliable buses.

Volvo now claims to have overtaken Mercedes-Benz as the biggest bus supplier in Europe; Britain is its biggest single market.

Low floor progress in Manchester . . .

Greater Manchester PTE's low-floor bus project is progressing, and the first low-floor buses should be on the region's streets before the end of the year. Stagecoach subsidiary Ribble will be using five Berkhof-bodied Dennis Lance SLFs on service M10, a Salford-based circular service via Pendleton, Eccles and Brookhouse. Starline and Bullocks will each be using Scania L113/Wright Axcess-ultralows; Starline is to use five on service 19 from Altrincham to Manchester Airport while Bullocks expects to take delivery of the first of its four imminently; they will enter service on 42, Manchester-Stockport via Wilmslow Road, at the beginning of December. Timeline has ordered five Volvo B10Ls with Alexander (Belfast) Ultra bodywork for services 508 and 560 between Bolton and Bury and 545, Bolton-Harwood, while GM Buses North is understood to be having five B10Ls bodied by Wrights for the 600, Wigan-Leigh.

Stuarts of Hyde was to have been involved, but has decided not to go ahead. Top-up funding of £25,000 per vehicle has been agreed by GMPTE on the understanding that the buses must stay on the routes specified for a minimum of two years and remain in the region for at least 10 years and that cost and patronage information has to be made available to the PTE for research.

Greater Manchester PTE is also working on plans to improve the quality of bus services in its area where post-deregulation competition is still at some of its fiercest. It has commissioned a study from consultants Mott MacDonald, calling for a network known as Busway Transit which would offer lowfloor, high-specification buses on selected corridors with bus priorities and selected stops. It is intended to attract car and bus users — Greater Manchester has one of the highest car commuting rates for a British conurbation. Meanwhile GMB North has launched its new Orbital branded services in Wigan using new Northern Counties-bodied Dennis Darts.

. . . and in Sheffield

Mainline has ordered nine 10.6m Wright Crusader-bodied Volvo B6LE accessible buses. They are to be 36-seaters and replace minibuses on two Sheffield city routes to Hillsborough. Volvo and Wrights are now examining the possibility of a 32-seat 9.5m version of the Crusader.

Buses Focus — Britain's Buses Today which will be on sale at Showbus on 24 September and goes on general sale on 28 September (price £2.75) contains information on low-floor buses throughout Britain, as well as articles on a whole range of topics examining the state of the British bus industry at present.

WMT looks at gas

West Midlands Travel is keen to introduce compressed natural gas buses. It is possible that some of the current order for Volvo B10Bs could be gas-powered, though the company needs to establish a partnership between the local authorities, Centro and British Gas and is also looking for other partners. The move would require long-term finance to invest in suitable infrastructure, to equip garages for refuelling CNG-powered buses.

Volvo already has experience of CNG-powered Volvo B10Bs, not least in its home town of Gothenburg. West Midlands is concerned that Britain is lagging behind the rest of the Europe in introducing this low-emission technology, even though it has a good natural gas infrastructure. The Wolverhampton-Walsall corridor has been identified as a potential area for natural gas operation; ironically the towns were previously linked by low-emission trolleybuses!

Bus people

Don Colson, chairman of West Midlands Travel has taken early retirement. He is 55 and recently suffered a heart complaint. He joined West Midlands PTE 17 years ago. He will still act as an adviser to WMT and its parent National Express Group. **Brian Kerslake**, WMT's commercial director, has also left the company. He was responsible for company acquisition, a function provided elsewhere in the National Express Group.

Janet Jeffrey, managing director of Thames Transit, is now also group director of operations for Transit Holdings.

Diary dates

24 September:
EFE Showbus, Imperial War Museum, Duxford, Cambs.
26 September:
Omnibus Society, fifth floor meeting rooms, London Transport headquarters, 55 Broadway, London SW1 (St James's Park underground station) at 18.45hrs. Speaker: D. B. Fowles, managing director, Brewers Motor Services.
28 September:
Ipswich Transport Society, Pauls Sports & Social Club, Stone Lodge Lane, Ipswich, 19.30hrs. Speaker: Robin Orbell, managing director, Eastern National.
30 September:
Cobham Bus Museum Display Day.
1 October:
Amersham & District seventh running day, featuring 75th anniversary of the Penn Bus Co Ltd. Dovecote car park, Amersham.

West of England Transport Collection annual Open Day. Winkleigh Airfield, Devon, on B3220. Details: 15 Land Park, Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7BH.
14 October:
Third National Road Transport History Symposium, National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hants. Fee: £10, including museum entry. Details: Teresa Godwin (R&RTHC), The Library, National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Brockenhurst, Hants SO42 7ZN.
15 October:
Manchester Museum of Transport, A. Mayne & Son running day.

Routemaster Operators & Owners Association Shillibeer Rally. Omnibus Business Centre, North Road, Islington, site of Shillibeer's North Road works, where the B-type bus was designed in LGOC days. 10.00-16.00hrs.

15 October continued:
Third Annual Vehicle Show, Crown Woods School, Richfield Road, Eltham, London SE9. 11am-4pm. Details: R. G. Monk, 0181-859 4581.

West Yorkshire Transport Museum Society Autumn Rally, Transperience Discovery Park, Low Moor, Bradford
19 October:
Buses Worldwide, Fred Tallent Hall, Drummond Street, London NW1. Peter White on Zimbabwe.

London Transport Museum one-day conference, 'The Transport London Deserves?'
21 October:
Warminster & West Wilts Vintage Bus Running Day. Free rides from 10.00. Details: Warminster/West Wilts VBR Day, 4 Saxons Acre, Warminster BA12 8HT.
22 October:
Cobham Bus Museum Display Day. 11.00-20.00, to allow nocturnal running, in conjunction with Kingston Operating Day, with RFs running between Cobham and Kingston for a farewell to Kingston garage. Admission to Cobham: £2, including unlimited travel on RT3491 between Brooklands Museum, Weybridge Station, Weybridge and Cobham.
29 October:
Nocturnal Heart of the Pennine rally, Halifax. Sponsored by *Buses*.
31 October:
Omnibus Society, fifth floor meeting rooms, London Transport headquarters, 55 Broadway, London SW1 (St James's Park underground station), 6.45pm. Speaker: John Owen, managing director, Thamesdown Transport.

PSV registrations

The general upward trend for new psv registrations accelerated again during August as many operators placed new N-registered vehicles in service.

Manufacturer	*July 1995**	*August 1995**	*1995 to date**
Bova	1 (4)	4 (3)	39 (50)
DAF	2 (12)	10 (20)	117 (76)
Dennis	50 (73)	85 (63)	728 (561)
Iveco	0 (0)	0 (1)	2 (2)
MAN	1 (0)	9 (4)	33 (30)
Mercedes-Benz	11 (1)	4 (0)	35 (2)
Optare	10 (14)	16 (8)	104 (97)
Renault	5 (0)	0 (0)	15 (1)
Scania	19 (27)	23 (15)	214 (126)
Volvo	44 (68)	128 (88)	1,131 (822)
Other British	0 (3)	0 (2)	9 (22)
Other imports	10 (6)	19 (15)	139 (121)
Total British	79 (126)	153 (123)	1,109 (1,077)
Total imports	74 (82)	145 (96)	1,457 (833)
Grand total	153 (208)	298 (219)	2,566 (1,910)

*Equivalent 1994 figures shown in brackets. Figures are for purpose-built psvs, and exclude van-derived vehicles. Source — SMMT.

REGISTRATION NOTES

D. J. STANIER

Reports please to **D. J. Stanier, 4 Arden Close, Derby DE23 6LG**

Once again, thanks are extended to the 'army' of observers who submitted details of their M/N registration changeover sightings. The usual format below shows highest reported M followed by the lowest N.

Aberdeen — TRS/TSO; **Aberystwyth** — AFF/BFF (Merionethshire area) and WEJ/YEJ (Cardiganshire); **Ayr** — DSJ/ESJ; **Bangor** — BJC/CCC; **Barrow** — VEO/BEO; **Birmingham** — SOV/SDA (note duplication of most of the Sxx marks for year M and N) and the former Dudley series EFD/EHA; **Bolton** — HTD/- ; **Boston** — UJL/WJL; **Bournemouth** — MPR/PEL; **Brighton** — FUP/KAP; **Bristol** — FTC/HAE (dealer series M-GHT/N not yet noted); **Cambridge** — XER/XCE (duplication evident for XCE, XEB, and XER); **Cardiff** — RHB/MDW (this office jumped from M-MAX to M-RBO, so the gap will now be filled by N-prefix marks); **Carlisle** — THH/UHH; **Chelmsford** — APU/AOO; **Chester** — BLG/CFM; **Coventry** — PVC/PKV (only M-PDU/PRW/PVC have appeared in the Pxx multiples, and of those, M-PVC is believed to be 'dealer'-issued); **Dumfries** — BSM/DSW; **Dundee** — YES/BSL; **Durham** — UUP/VUP; **Edinburgh** — YSC/ASC; **Exeter** — NDV/PDV; **Glasgow** — HHS/JGA; **Gloucester** — KFH (plus a report of M8xx **M**DG)/LDD; **Grimsby** — OBE/OJV; **Guildford** — NPB/PPA; **Hastings** — XHC/BDY; **Haverfordwest** — DBX/HBX and EDE/-; **Hereford** — TCJ/VVJ and PFO/VFO; former **Huddersfield** marks are reported as being issued by *Manchester*, but confirmation is still required — M21 UVH was noted and N-VVH/ACP have been passed to me; **Hull** — NAG/AAG; **Inverness** — XST/YST; **Ipswich** — GPV/HBJ; **Keith** — JSE/KSE; **Kendal** — GEC/LEC; **Kirkwall** — BBS/CBS; **Leeds** — AWW/**AUA** (also reported is M-**EWU**); **Leicester** — MFP/NAY; **Lerwick** — JPS /-; **Lincoln** — HFE/HTL; **Liverpool** — AKD/AWM; **London (Central)** — MYR/OHM; **London (North-East)** — WMG/AMC; **London (North-West)** — DLX/ELN; **London (South-West)** — FGP/FGT; **Luton** — XNK/CBH; **Maidstone** — UKE/VKR; **Manchester** — TNE/UBU; **Middlesbrough** — UAJ/UVN; **Newcastle** — LFT (issued after LJR)/LFT; **Newport (IoW)** — HDL/NDL; **Northampton** — MNV/OBD; **Norwich** — DCL/FAH; **Nottingham** — VAU (unconfirmed report of M-VCH)/**UTV**; **Oban** — TSB/USB; **Oxford** — YFC/BBW; **Peterborough** — KEG/KEW; **Portsmouth** — BTR/DBK; **Preston** — AHG (this VRO jumped from M-XCK to M-AFR)/DBV; **Reading** — UAN (M-TBL had been a 'dealer' series)/TRD; **Salisbury** — NAA/PAA; **Selkirk** — PKS/SKS; **Sheffield** — XKY/YHE; **Shrewsbury** — SNT/TAW; **Stirling** — TLS/ULS; **Stoke** — AFA/BRF; **Stornoway** — OJS/RJS; **Stranraer** — POS/-; **Swansea** — PEP (reported after PWN)/RCY (as already reported, many N-RCY/RTH/RWN have been used in adverts); **Swindon** — GMR/HMW; **Taunton** — WYC/AYA; **Truro** — EAF (and a few ECV for buses)/GRL; **Warrington** — YTB/-; **Wick** — OSK/RSK; **Worcester** — SAB/VAB; **York** — SBT/**SBT** and the EU Export series GXP/HXP.

M133 SCY has been reported for the **Scilly Isles** (no year L observations have been submitted!).

If any readers are able to fill in the few gaps or improve on the published series, contributions will be most welcome.

I must acknowledge the following who have sent in reports for this listing — R. Barnett, E. Bear, W. Beckles, K. Bladon, D. Blake, J. Clarkson, A. Cockram, G. Cox, A. Cundy, G. Downes, R. Drummond, J. Dunkley, B. Eaton, T. J. Fincham, G. Girling, D. Hadlow, M. Hall, A. Hazlehurst, D. M. Hinde, R. Holton, P. Hughes, J. Kennett, Mrs G. Lewis, C. Martin, R. Mesure, J. G. Roberts, Mr and Mrs A. Rogerson, S. Rose, S. Samuel, C. Smith, J. Stait, J. Taylor, D. B. Thomas, M. Townsend, P. M. Tulloch, D. Vincent, H. Wakefield, E. D. Ward, P. Weetman, K. West, C. D. Wilkinson and P. Williamson (these contributors had sent in reports as at 20 August).

New subs address

There is now a new address for subscriptions to all Ian Allan magazines, including *Buses*. All subscription matters, including new subscriptions (£25.20 a year UK; see Contents page for other details) and renewals should now be addressed to Ian Allan Subscriptions, Bradley Pavilions, Pear Tree Road, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ. There is a credit card hotline, tel: 01454 620070 and the fax is 01454 620080.

20 YEARS AGO

ALAN MILLAR

North Norfolk is poor bus territory. Dozens of tiny villages are linked by B-roads and unclassified lanes which would make a conventional bus service painfully slow even if it stood the vaguest chance of being viable. Which it wouldn't.

Not even in 1975 when Eastern Counties calculated it needed a £15,000 annual subsidy just to put a Bristol LH or MW round six villages within five miles of Holt. You could repeat that exercise several dozen times across the whole county and still come nowhere near breaking the villagers' dependence on cars for daily transport.

As October 1975 *Buses* reported, something cheaper was needed to provide a basic bus service. Eastern Counties' answer — in partnership with Norfolk County Council — was to provide the villagers with their own minibus duly decked out in National Bus Company poppy red with National Norfolk fleetnames and let them drive it themselves, provided they didn't compete with the company's main routes.

In those BHB — Before Harry Blundred — days, an NBC minibus was only a low roof Ford Transit converted into a 12-seater by Deansgate of Manchester. But it was expected to cost no more than £6,000 a year to run, up to £2,000 of which would be paid for by the council if fares and private hire revenue fell short of the modest target. A village bus committee was put in day-to-day control of the service, volunteers drove the bus and Eastern Counties and a Ford dealer maintained it.

As a subsequent article reported, it started on 3 November after 12 drivers passed their psv test and it ran initially on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and the first Saturday of each month. Sounding as if we should all aspire to being cooped up at home three weekends out of four, *Buses* commented: 'This last facet does sound idyllically rural but is in fact the result of the careful preliminary investigations of demand. People wanted to pay visits to Norwich for shopping and the like, but relatively infrequently, and it was thought that a monthly facility would meet their need.' They reached Norwich's bright lights by changing half way on and off big Eastern Counties buses.

NBC only dabbled at this interesting concept, but community minibuses thrive in many parts of rural England today where conventional buses have long since vanished.

The National Norfolk Ford Transit at Gunthorpe, according to the signpost seven miles from Holt on which the service was based.

ON THE MAP

BARRY S DOE AFIMA, MCIT

The following operators have re-issued maps similar to earlier editions; from FWT: **Bournemouth Transport** (Yellow Buses) (tel: 01202 557272), an excellent full-colour production with separate maps for Monday-Saturday daytime and evening/Sunday networks plus frequency guide and **Eastern National** (tel: 01245 353104), with town blow-ups and being unusual in using colours to distinguish commercial and tendered routes: and from Pindar, **Midland Red West** (tel: 01905 763888), with its usual excellent full-colour system map plus many town blow-ups.

Thamesdown (tel: 01793 523700) has dropped its separate map in favour of offering the same in a slightly smaller version in its A5 Swindon town services book (priced 25p). Full-colour, it shows fare zones and different colours for each route. Not all operators can get away with a map in a book, as a centrespread is only A4 and then the system has to be of suitable shape to fit. It works well for Swindon, however - an excellent map.

Next, **Inverness Traction** (tel: 01463 239292) has included a much-improved system map in its Inverness Town book, with a separate blow-up for the centre showing all bus stops. It only uses the spot colours of the text which makes for cost-effective production and shows well what can be achieved in-house to excellent effect.

Taking counties and PTEs in the same fashion, the following have re-issued maps (all from FWT): **Berkshire** (tel: 01734 234524) and **Oxfordshire** (tel: 01865 810405), both using colours to show frequency and with town blow-ups and detailed frequency tables: **Powys** (tel: 01597 826643), an excellent map given the many, but infrequent services that operate in this large county, and containing a frequency table; and **Centro** (tel: 0121 200 2700), which has re-issued its Birmingham and Walsall maps.

The Birmingham map is the full system version with an inset for the city centre, despite there being another showing every city centre stop (though not re-printed at this time). It comes with the superb nine-column frequency chart that we have come to expect from Centro and it is worth reflecting that for quality and frequency of reprints, Centro produces the best maps of any PTE, though equalled by Greater Manchester and Tyne & Wear for quality when the latter get round to doing them (their latest being 1993)! Strathclyde has an excellent Glasgow map (reviewed last month) but lacks route details on others; West Yorkshire has reasonable system maps that lack all clarity in towns; whilst Merseyside and South Yorkshire produce nothing.

Yes, such urban areas are subject to frequent change, but they are also complicated and hence there is even more need for a map. I still use the last South Yorkshire and Merseyside issues as a guide — now up to ten years old — and still find them far better than nothing, and they should hang their heads in shame for ignoring the needs of their public. As someone who is a well-known critic of Tory transport policies I have to admit that as none of these PTEs is known as being ultra right-wing, if this is the best Labour authorities can do, what hope for the future?

A list of the best shire counties produces the same result; Surrey, for example, has always been first-rate yet never known as a Labour heartland; for that, one thinks of the South Wales Valleys, yet Mid Glamorgan has never published a map or a comprehensive bus timetable in its life — a life that, in common with all Welsh authorities, draws to a close.

My last review this month, therefore, could be the best news on this front for some time — and the best ever for **Wales**; the publication of a public transport map for the whole country. The eight Welsh counties, the Wales Tourist Board and cartographer FWT itself have jointly-sponsored a version in the hope it will be continued after re-organisation.

It shows all Wales on one large sheet with solid red lines for routes with at least four buses a day, dotted for others, each with bus number. The eastern boundary is Chepstow-Monmouth-Hereford-Shrewsbury-Chester (but with wholly English routes omitted). There is a blow-up for the Welsh Valleys, plus an index. The reverse lists all routes (including railway and ferry services) with operator, frequency (daytime, evening and Sunday) and end-to-end journey-times quoted. Operators' and Tourist Information Centres' addresses and telephone numbers are added, as are sketch maps of Britain showing through National Express and train services to Wales. Bus Rover information is given. It is obtainable from any Welsh county or TIC. Congratulations to FWT for this splendid initiative, which must rank as map of the year.

Crosville's early years, a new annual and British trolleybuses

CROSVILLE MOTOR SERVICES
PART 1: THE FIRST 40 YEARS

JOHN CARROLL & DUNCAN ROBERTS. VENTURE PUBLICATIONS. 290mm x 207mm. 160pp. hardback. **£21.50**

More has been written about Crosville than many of the other large bus companies. It began with two eminently readable books by former general manager W. J. Crosland Taylor, who had been in almost at the start of what was a family company. He wrote entertainingly and interestingly at a time when books about bus operators were rare, and those written from inside a company rarer still. Since then the old Transport Publishing Company produced two books on Crosville or aspects of it. Now there is this one, and Venture has a further three in the pipeline.

Crosland Taylor's books presented a rather idyllic view of the company, glossing over a rather uneasy relationship with his older brother (who ran the business for some years, but died suddenly), yet being rather critical of the price paid by the London Midland & Scottish Railway Company after it had bought Crosville and went on to buy other smaller operators. Subsequently the LMS passed part of its interest in Crosville to Tilling-BAT. But Crosville would have remained a poor company, if it had not gained Brookes Brothers' White Rose business, which had a near monopoly in Prestatyn and Rhyl. Today successor company Crosville Cymru derives a considerable amount of its income from this area.

One of the merits of this latest book is the way it relates to the present as well as the past. It talks about Crosville in the 1920s: '. . . first and foremost profit driven. It was the way things were in those days are are once more'. Then there was the fight for services through the Mersey Tunnel, with some of the best and highest-paid barristers in the country appearing in the traffic court. But the fight was lost. More than 40 years later, in 1987, Crosville and North Western began a Chester-Liverpool-Southport service. It apparently does well, too.

One of the stranger practices of the old Crosville was to avoid the use of conventional destination displays. Instead, Widd plates, small plates displaying a paper printed destination between two sheets of celluloid were used. They were hard to read in daylight and almost impossible at night. Yet when Western Transport was taken over in 1933 its perfectly good destination blinds were discarded and new Widd plates made specially, even though routes did not change.

Crosville had a strong presence in Wrexham, and wartime services to the huge Royal Ordnance Factory here created enormous demand for extra vehicles. A few years later the early postwar holiday boom created another enormous vehicle demand. All this brought about the acquisition of a motley, yet fascinating, collection of vehicles, many secondhand, and most ultimately re-engined, rebodied or rebuilt. Well over 200 had been hired from 17 different operators mainly for use at Wrexham, some staying only a month or two, others five years.

The level of interference when local authorities could issue and control licences and services is well brought out. Even a simple route might involve three local authorities who might favour one operator against another, or have an obsession about something: at Crewe it was conversion to pneumatic tyres.

The book follows what might be termed the standard Venture format with main text and 'chat' at the front, then detailed fleet lists, itemised year-by-year. Finally there are appendices (four in this book) and an index. The main text is divided again for the complicated years 1919-29 into the English and Welsh depots, with the strange excursion into Devon having a short chapter of its own.

The appendices include one detailing postwar fleet refurbishment that perhaps should go in the next book. The major body rebuilds outline how resourceful (as well as relatively well staffed) operators used to be. Two African hardwoods were used: one was sapele, out of which waistrails were made 'partly because Mr J. F. Burnley, assistant chief engineer, had been able to buy logs of suitable length'. It is little gems like this that make the book such an interesting read.
JOHN ALDRIDGE

CLASSIC BUS YEARBOOK
1995

Edited by GAVIN BOOTH. IAN ALLAN. 235mm x 173mm. 128pp hardback. **£10.99**

If you read — and like — *Classic Bus*, then you ought to read — and like — this, for it is an extension of the magazine, with features written by many of its well-known contributors and photographers. That does not mean it is dull.

Alan Millar contributes a trenchant review of London Transport's many failings in the 1970s and early 1980s. He deals in particular with the problems and early demise of most of the AEC Merlins and Swifts, and the short lives of many Daimler Fleetlines. There was a particular irony in LT actually repurchasing some of its former Fleetlines back from Clydeside for use with Bexleybus. In fairness to LT he might have made more of the undue influence held by some unions over it, particularly at Aldenham. Equally he might also have criticised LT's failure to amend its maintenance system (and associated bonus payments) to deal with the different needs of Fleetline compared to Routemasters. The so-called quiet Fleetlines, incidentally, were developed at the behest of the Greater London Council, another organisation with undue influence over LT.

People writing about their early interest in buses usually start 'with my old box Brownie camera', and provide out-of-focus pictures to prove the point. Gavin Booth has avoided such pitfalls and describes vividly the bus scene in Scotland and East Anglia, when he was somewhat younger. A daily Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Edinburgh stage service was one of those useful facilities that has vanished: apart from the odd bus enthusiast (in a manner of speaking) probably few people made the journey, but the service provided useful intermediate links now lost.

Alan Townsin talks somewhat differently about the war years. Among his illustrations is one of Leyland's LS1, a model about which little is known. It was probably a successor to the prewar Lion LT and Cheetah IZ models. Another picture is of what looks like a late-1930s Bristol K, with late prewar-style ECW body, operated by Eastern National. Under all that actually was a Leyland petrol engine and gearbox, Bristol radiator, and Thornycroft XC chassis of 1931. It survived into the postwar years but, like so many interesting vehicles, vanished before the preservation movement got under way.

A dramatic view of where many old vehicles went is provided by T. W. Moore's 1964 pictures and story about Bird's scrapyard at Stratford-on-Avon. Albion's postwar products for Scottish operators, and colour features on preserved trolleybuses and South Wales Transport buses are among other interesting features. Three more preserved buses appear as cover pictures, but we are not told what they are.
JOHN ALDRIDGE

THE LONDON RLH REMEMBERED

PETER GASCOINE. ROADMASTER PUBLISHING. 240mm x 170mm. 80pp. **£12.95**

Mother always said . . . 'If you can't say anything good about someone, then say nothing at all'. Which is how your reviewer feels about this publication.

The RLH was spawned by a British Transport Commission edict when 20 AEC Regent III 9612E/Weymann L53R were diverted from the company which had ordered them, Midland General, to the London Transport Executive; although miniscule compared with its highbridge brothers, the LPTB lowbridge fleet was a very mixed bag, the AEC ST, STL and Daimler D all surviving into LTE ownership and the introduction into service in June 1950 of RLH1-20 was an effort both to modernise, and augment, the LTE lowbridge fleet. Standardisation did not come until well over two years later with a repeat order of 56 buses.

With a class of only 76 vehicles and delivered in a period when both historical and photographic coverage had blossomed fully, one would have expected a most concise and detailed chronicle but this is not the case, and one is not sure which goal is being aimed at by the author, a renowned devotee of the type and the owner of RLH32, which bus is depicted photographically no less than 12 times in this book! There are colour covers and 96 monochrome illustrations, many of which are of indifferent quality; your reviewer becomes incensed when a destination screen does not reproduce and thus, we have to take the word of the author that, on page 19, it is a rare working of 'RLH43 . . . on route 428' because one cannot discern the destination screen!

In my young day, works such as this were published by the Oakwood Press at about 4/6d (22½p); without any colour within, I would think twice before paying nigh on £13 for this book, however well-intentioned.
V.H. DARLING

EFE LEYLAND TITAN PD2/ORION

1/76th scale. **Guide Price £10.50**

Following the AEC Regent and Daimler CV is EFE's first Orion variant with exposed radiator, as Ribble Titan PD2/12 1495 (JRN 62) and very good it looks, too.

Happily, the postwar Leyland radiator has very well captured on this model, which is also one of the first to be offered properly finished with registration plates at long last. A further touch of realism is added by an effective roof ventilator transfer — all in all, a very pleasing model.
(Guide price supplied by Rotherham Modelworld).
JOHN G. LIDSTONE

NORTH EAST BUS HANDBOOK

BRITISH BUS PUBLISHING
210mm x 147mm 148pp **£9.95**

The more bus companies in the north-east consolidate, the more newcomers seem to spring up ensuring that the bus scene there is never dull. Keeping up with it all is something of a nightmare, so the latest edition of British Bus Publishing's North East Bus Handbook is to be welcomed. It's sad to see OK Travel in particular lumped in with the rest of Go-Ahead, though the use of 9xxx fleetnames for OK at least makes it a distinctive entity in the list — and reminds us of what a huge undertaking OK had become; it was no small independent with about 200 buses listed.

But then there are other operators which one might still consider to be small independents until you see the size of the fleets listed, like Classic Coaches and Catch-a-Bus. The trouble is the material is so fascinating that one becomes aware of a shortcoming of this series; the listing of vehicles is very comprehensive, and very well-illustrated to a high standard; but we could do with knowing a little more about the companies included. Who, for instance, is Amberline? Is it anything to do with the better-known firm of the same name in the north west? Maybe just a few lines on each company would add flesh to the bones of the vehicle listings and encourage an interest which goes beyond just underlining numbers. But this book continues the high standard already set by the rest of the series.
STEPHEN MORRIS

OPTARE SPECTRA

PIRATE 1/76th scale KIT **£29.95**

The latest kits from Pirate Models provide the modeller with two easy-to-assemble versions of the highbridge Optare Spectra with either single door (Kit 4494) or dual-door (Kit 4495). This is an imposing vehicle alongside Corgi or EFE models filling a much-needed gap in modern double-deckers. Priced at £29.95 each they are available from John Gay, 7 Horsham Lane, Upchurch, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7AL.

Corgi has introduced a Weymann-bodied single-decker to its Corgi Classics range, seen here as a Dundee AEC Regal IV. This will be reviewed in more detail later.
JOHN G. LIDSTONE

BRITISH TROLLEY BUSES 1911- 1972

GEOFF LUMB. IAN ALLAN.
235mm x 173mm. 128pp. **£14. 99**

It is something of a surprise to realise that there were 23 trolleybus manufacturers in Britain between 1911 and 1966 and Geoff Lumb looks at both their histories and their products. Several concerns joined forces, sometimes only temporarily, while others were merged upon takeover by competitors and the author manages to untangle these relationships and deal with each participant separately. A diagrammatic timechart, which would have looked better if not hand-drawn, gives an at-a-glance picture of trolleybus manufacture over a period of 60 years.

Although looked at mainly in terms of the chassis builders, the book also covers many interesting aspects of the bodybuilders' input to the story. The manufacturers' contribution to the export market is not overlooked with many such vehicles illustrated, some on pre-shipment trials on home systems. The illustrations are all of excellent quality and have been drawn from a variety of sources, including manufacturers' promotional brochures, with the result that the widest variety of types is shown. The list of acknowledgements shows the degree of research and consultation that the author has undertaken.

The book will certainly resolve many enthusiasts' questions about British trolleybuses although it will no doubt serve to raise a good many more; indeed, it has already sent the reviewer to his files and bookshelves! An notable omission is any discussion of the contribution made to the story of British trolleybus production by the chassisless vehicles constructed for London Transport, although three of these vehicles are illustrated as their manufacture necessarily involved some input from chassis suppliers. British trolleybuses were always referred to by their chassis and perhaps it is for this reason that the author chose not to include the chassisless models. The book is best described as an encyclopaedia of trolleybus production and the reviewer is finding it hard to put it down. Production tables have been included for Straker-Clough, Karrier-Clough, and Railless vehicles but full production lists, with details such as chassis numbers and customers, have been excluded; nevertheless, many batches of vehicles can be identified from the text, which will help to answer those frustrating queries that enthusiasts always have, particularly those relating to vehicles manufactured for export. While Geoff Lumb's photographs have appeared in several books and publications this is his first book and the reviewer whole-heartedly recommends it to all enthusiasts and transport historians.
ROLAND BOX

NEWS

from the capital

JOHN ALDRIDGE

London entrepreneurial

In theory, if not in practice, bus companies are free to run non-LT-sponsored services inside London, and anything they like further afield, subject — of course — to the approval of the necessary authorities. It might seem surprising that so far there are few signs of entrepreneurial efforts by the former LT subsidiaries, but one reason is no doubt the maze of bureaucracy (and expense) involved.

Any operator wanting to run a non-LT service needs to obtain a London local licence. The operator should apply at least 16 weeks before the proposed starting date to the Traffic Director for London, and 12 weeks before the starting date to the Traffic Commissioner. It can seek either a short-term licence (up to six months) or a full five-year one. Short-term ones cost £10, five-year ones have an annual fee of £20, but in addition there is an application fee of £100.

Terminal points are likely to be the main bone of contention for any proposed service terminating in the City of Westminster, for example, at Victoria. Although local councils may object to the proposals, surprisingly the operator does not have a legal duty to inform them — though it would be prudent. It would also be prudent to talk to the licensing department of LT, which might be concerned about abstraction from other routes.

It is also prudent to talk to the traffic section of the Metropolitan Police, indeed, it is a requirement.

A Department of Transport publication 'A Guide to London Local Service Licensing' sets out most of the requirements. But it does not mention practical problems such as persuading the Infrastructure Unit of LT to display your routenumber on its bus stop flags.

Perhaps then it is not surprising that nearly all the present services run by the former LT subsidiaries are operated under agreement with or to the requirements of LT. In addition LT can also sanction routes if they provide a new facility: one example of this is what is now Londonlinks' 421 from Morden to Sutton, part of which serves quite populous roads near Morden which were previously totally unserved. Paralleling them are other roads with excellent services.

There is, however, one way round all this bureaucracy: make the route 15 miles long and it becomes an express service, with a much simpler licensing procedure . . .

London shakes

Current automotive engines have totally different characteristics to the traditional ones we know, or remember, so well, such as the Leyland O.680 or the AEC 9.6 litre. Modern engines are designed to idle, or develop maximum torque, at different speeds to older designs, so re-engineering an existing vehicle demands care and trial, particularly if the existing driveline is retained.

Numerous London Routemasters have been refurbished, and fitted with new Cummins or Iveco engines. Unfortunately, the idling characteristics of the Cummins do not, or did not initially, suit the structure of the bus. I understand that a prototype was perfectly satisfactory, but the installation design was changed. I travelled on an early re-engined example, and was appalled. The front of the lower deck in particular vibrated in incredible fashion, and I wondered how any engineer worth his salt could have signed off the installation as OK. It certainly gave credence to the widely circulated story about how one conversion on completion of its delivery run was found to have lost a complete window. It had shaken out en route.

Anyway, a change to the installation specification, perhaps nearer to the original, did the trick and vibration no longer seems to be a problem. Of course, if unchecked long-term, it might lead to fatigue and structural problems. However, in the meantime a major whispering campaign seems to have built up, with allegations of danger, or safety being compromised. To allay fears, London Transport itself in February commissioned an independent and expert body, the Freight Transport Association's inspection service, to investigate. The FTA inspected 10% of the Cummins-engined versions (a high sample) and also checked garage maintenance histories.

Not surprisingly, it has — broadly speaking — given the buses and the installation a clean bill of health. But sadly, only an abbreviated version of its findings has been released. I quote from that part of the report relating to London United's Routemasters at Shepherds Bush garage. 'There was no evidence to support the allegation . . . that the buses were suffering from any severe form of vibration . . . '. Later, the report stated ' . . . the overall condition of the vehicles inspected should be considered satisfactory as they did not pose any immediate danger to the driver, passengers or members of the public.'

That is not the most reassuring report I have ever read. I would not expect any bus on the road with any reputable operator to pose 'any immediate danger'. But what about future dangers, or possible dangers? I would like to think that in, say five years, they should still pose no danger. So why not publish the full report? Or did the report have some reservations about the future?

Meanwhile, if I were one of the fleet engineers, I would be having engine oil samples checked regularly, not for safety reasons, but for cost reasons. The Cummins engine has not previously been used in this kind of application, with this gearing and driveline. Does it like it? Does it take kindly to the stop-start nature of central London bus work? What is engine life going to be like?

London trolleybuses

LT has identified nine areas of London for closer studies of ways of improving transport links, and over the next few months will talk to local councils with a view to developing specific route options. It will also make recommendations on the most appropriate type of transport for each.

That, we are told, might include not only trams, but also trolleybuses: the mind boggles. But then Britain has rediscovered the tram in Manchester and Sheffield, with promises for Croydon too, so why not?

PS. What about the horse bus? Some people think horses are environmentally friendly!

CentreWest not short

Peter Hendy, managing director of CentreWest, has pointed out, further to the item in *Buses* August on staff shortages, that CentreWest is not actually short of staff for its existing operations, but has been advertising for drivers for newly-gained tendered work.

London tenders

Since I last wrote about tenders for London bus services LT Buses has advertised some more. Indeed, it is a process that will go on indefinitely.

This batch, of nine, includes a night service and the Richmond and Kingston mobility bus network. On the whole the routes are rather more spread around, though two (95, Southall-Shepherds Bush and 105. Heathrow-Shepherds Bush) are somewhat closer together.

But at least there are no networks: I really do wonder whether, on humanitarian grounds, networks should be retendered in one great lump, as at Orpington. Yes, I know it's hard to do otherwise, but there does seem to be considerable potential hardship to staff if virtually the whole operation for which they work collapses overnight.

There can also be operational problems, and considerable inconvenience to passengers, when staff start leaving before closure day.

There is little change on the latest set of tenders awarded in East London; Stagecoach East London gets to keep the 262, Stratford-Beckton and 374, Harold Hill-Romford, requiring eight buses each, though it has gained the 473, North Woolwich-Stratford, requiring seven buses, from Grey-Green and lost the 678, East Beckton-Stratford, to Capital Citybus. It requires only one bus. Thamesway has retained the 379, Chingford-Yardley Lane, which also uses one bus. The 262, 374 and 473 are all to be operated with new double-deckers fitted with Euro 2 engines; the six-year contracts take effect next March, more than six months before Euro 2 becomes law.

London Victoria

There has been a bus station outside Victoria railway station since the days of the old London General Omnibus Co but by modern standards it is rather cramped for both buses and passengers. Only in recent years has it gained an overall roof, something welcomed by passengers — if not by photographers.

Behind the bus station is a narrow one-way street, used by some east- and southbound buses, and next to that some unprepossessing buildings containing the direct entrances to the District and Victoria Underground lines.

Now a new planning application has been made by London Transport Property and a property company to redevelop the area, with a new building and shops, better entrances to the Underground, and a modern bus station. There would also be changes to the surrounding roads layout.

The only snag with the scheme, to my mind, is that the new covered bus station would only serve buses heading north and west: those going to the other two points of the compass would still pick up at the roadside.

Not quite there yet

Countdown isn't Counting at many locations in the North London Nags Head scheme, writes RICHARD POUT where displays have remained blank for several months or give waiting times that are wildly inaccurate. Steve Balogh, Countdown Project Manager with LTB admits there have been some 'teething problems'. One problem is that drivers are not keying in details, though there are also some problems with on-bus equipment.

One problem with a fragmented industry is varying standards between operating companies. For example, the Countdown display at Crouch End Broadway often shows only one route; Leaside's W2 which runs every 15 minutes, is displayed perhaps with anticipated arrivals at 2 min and 17 min, even though the bus that is 'due' and in sight is Northern's W7, which operates at 5-6 minute intervals during the day. Many other displays are often completely blank, or indicate a bus is still three minutes away as it is actually pulling away from the stop!

Now that it is owned by MTL, London Suburban Buses is adopting allover LT red livery. Ailsas V1 and V2 have been transferred to it from London Northern at Potters Bar and thus now reach Central London on the 4. London Suburban remains a separate entity though certain management functions are now undertaken by London Northern.
D. IVE

Still in MTL territory, London Northern is using this open-top Metrobus, M804, in Sightseers livery on the Zoo service.
G. L. INNES

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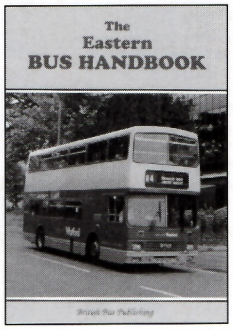

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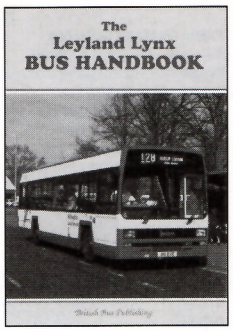

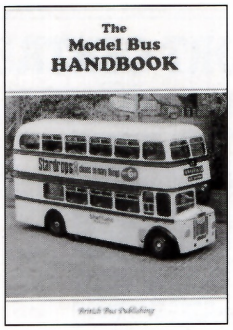

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350.—AEC Society, 12th Annual Rally at Woollaton Park, Nottingham on Sunday 28th May, 1995. 60 minutes.

351.—100 Years of the Omnibus—Siegen to Netphen, Germany. March 18th, 1995. Video by David Cole. Parade at Netphen and on route to Siegen.

352.—Merseyside, UK: Buses. visiting Liverpool and Garston January 1995 then St Helens in October 1994 and Birkenhead including Heritage Tramway in June 1995.

353.—Bus Rallies, UK: Buses. Visiting Gateshead Rally May 14, 1995 and Southend Sunday 4th June, 1995. Both very wet!

354.—Greater Manchester area, UK: Buses filmed November, 1994–June 1995, visits Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Central Manchester and Altrincham.

356.—Vancouver, Canada, Trolleybus, Buses and Automated LRT. Vido by Dave Spencer taken June 1995. Trolleybuses in City Centre and Ride along Skytrain Route. 62 minutes.

363.—Netley Bus Rally, Southampton. All vehicles seen arriving at the Royal Victoria Country Park and scenes at the rally site, July 1995. Duration 60 minutes.

364.—Tram Sunday, Fleetwood, UK. Trams, Preserved Vehicles as seen arriving at Fleetwood for the 11th Annual Tram Sunday. Lasts 60 minutes. Video by Dave Spencer.

365.—North East Buses, UK, 1995. Video by Dave Spencer taken in June/July 1995 visiting Sunderland, Gateshead, Newcastle and South Shields.

366.—Commercials in Action Vol. 5. More scenes from TruckFest 95, Bus and Coach Wales, AEC Rally 95. Fleetwood and July 95, A52 near Derby

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Hartlepool Bristol RE 77 (OEF 77K) meets the 'new guard' in the shape of Stagecoach Northern Counties-bodied Volvo B10M 409 (M409 SPY) at Hartlepool's depot.
NICK LARKIN

RE REDUCTION ON TEESSIDE

The Stagecoach takeover of Hartlepool has, as elsewhere, led to the introduction of new buses. As a result more than 25 Bristol REs have disappeared from the Teesside area's roads this year, as NICK LARKIN reports

Until this summer, Teesside has been a major bastion of the Bristol RE. You could ride on 25-year-old examples in all-day service with Hartlepool Transport, and, if awake and brave enough, sample the delights of a Delta example on a major route at two o'clock in the morning. Now, these opportunities have suddenly gone, as have many of the REs. Hartlepool was acquired by Stagecoach Holdings in January, meaning the inevitable new, admittedly passenger-friendly, Volvo B10Ms in white and stripes, and the first major cull of this operator's REs this decade.

Meanwhile Delta, another Bristol RE operator in the area, surrendering its three bus services on 26 July in exchange for Cleveland Transit's Cleveland Coaches operation

The current situation

Hartlepool still had 14 REs on the road at the end of August, plus three in storage, from the 33 in service when Stagecoach took over. Stockton-on-Tees based Delta, which only began running buses from deregulation day and expanding to a peak of 25 REs from a bewildering variety of sources, has retained five for a school contract, the rest going for scrap.

77 continues to provide stalwart service in Hartlepool, though probably not for much longer.
NICK LARKIN

The RE could disappear completely from both operators within the next 12 months, more than 30 years since United's prototype, 7431 HN, lumbered into the area on services from Darlington on in 1962. The type has served Hartlepool faithfully since 1967, when a batch of seven flat screen ECW-bodied examples replaced 1949 Daimler CVG6s. These were followed by two further batches of seven vehicles over the next two years. In fact, Hartlepool bought REs every year until 1975, when the model was withdrawn from the home market, by which time it was operating 58 examples, all with Leyland engines and ECW bodywork.

The REs continued to give an exemplary account of themselves into the 1980s, so the decision was taken to retain and refurbish them. Two flat-screen examples, FEF 41E, latterly used as a trainer, and JEF 658G which finished its days in commemorative 1920s West Hartlepool Corporation trolleybus livery, became useful sources of spares, and two further RELLs, GRM 300L and PVT 219L were also bought for spares.

Almost the entire fleet of curved-screen REs was to remain in service with Hartlepool, then an employee-owned company, until the Stagecoach takeover, a couple, OEF 74/5K, retaining allover advertising livery. However withdrawals began soon afterwards, with LEF 59-61H being the first to go, with OEF 76/9K also having gone by April.

The majority of the new Volvos appeared on 1 May, leading to further RE withdrawals, some of the buses being stored at Cleveland Transit's Stockton depot. On that day, LEF 60H left Hartlepool for its new life in preservation — having been purchased by myself. It was the first curved screen RE to enter service in Hartlepool.

Hartlepool REs withdrawn since Stagecoach takeover:

Number	*Registration*	*Fate*
59	LEF 59H	Northern Bus, PVS scrap
60	LEF 60H	N. Larkin, preservation
61	LEF 61H	Northern Bus, still extant
65	LEF 65H	Northern Bus, PVS scrap
69-71	MEF 69-71J	Northern Bus/PVS
72	MEF 72J	Northern Bus
73	OEF 73K	Northern Bus/PVS
75	OEF 75K	Northern Bus
76	OEF 76K	Northern Bus/PVS
78	OEF 78K	stored at Hartlepool
79	OEF 79K	Northern Bus/PVS
82	SEF 82L	Northern Bus
83	SEF 83L	scrapped by Hartlepool
86	GEF 186N	Northern Bus
88/9	GEF 188/9N	stored at Hartlepool
91	GEF 191N	In service with Northern Bus

Still in service with Hartlepool:

67	MEF 67J
74/7	OEF 74/7K
80/1/4	SEF 80/1/4L
85/7, 90	GEF 185/7, 90N
92-6	JAJ 292-6N

(67 was withdrawn, but returned to service on 22 August.)

REs remaining with Delta

IIL 1839, formerly NWU 321M
IIL 2271, formerly BVF 668J
HHW 916/921L
AHT 212J

Where are they now?

The Hartlepool RE situation is increasingly complex. Following publicity in the British Bus Preservation Group's magazine, *British Bus News*, Northern Bus of Anston, Yorkshire's great RE afficionados and members of the group, purchased dual-purpose GEF 191N for further service. An additional 12 Hartlepool buses had gone to Northern Bus by the end of August, some immediately being despatched to PVS, Carlton, for scrap. These are not expected to operate in normal service, but may be retained in the short term. The British Bus Preservation Group has been given the chance to find homes for these vehicles — ring 01480 891794, not Northern Bus.

You can, of course still ride on Hartlepool REs in Hartlepool, and three are stored. These survivors are not expected to be painted in Stagecoach livery, and in late-August there were no plans to withdraw further examples, though other buses could be cascaded from anywhere in the Stagecoach group, and a new batch of Volvos is expected next year.

Delta's RE-operated school runs are commercial services, so it is possible to ride on one, if you can endure taunts from the non-enthusiast young! Cleveland's school contracts are due to be renegotiated when the county council ceases to be in March next year, so anything could happen. Peter Munday at Delta, looking back on nine years of successful service, said: 'The REs have served us well. Had we gone for Leyland Nationals we'd never have achieved what we achieved.'

So, the Teeside RE story may have a few chapters to go — but probably not many.

Anyone interested in preserving a Hartlepool RE is invited to contact Nick Larkin at 10 Hillfield, Alconbury, nr Huntington PE17 5WA, tel 01480 891794

RE FAREWELL AT BADGERLINE

Badgerline was the last of the former Bristol Tramways derivatives to run any Bristol single-deckers; that era ended on 29 July

The last day for Badgerline's famous trio of Bristol RELLs arrived on 29 July. The three vehicles were remarkable survivors; Bristol Omnibus had had 439 REs of various descriptions, of which 52 had gone to Badgerline on its formation in 1985. The remaining vehicles had survived the arrival of 14 Volvo B10M buses, seven Leyland Lynxes, 16 Dennis Lances and 25 Dennis Darts, not to mention countless minibuses, to achieve up to 23 years' service. The three survivors were all at Wells and on 29 July it was arranged for them to cover a full day's service on their usual routes. These were 376, Bristol-Wells-Yeovil, 126, Wells-Weston, 160, Wells-Shepton Mallet, 163, Wells-Taunton and 173, Wells-Bath. They ran as duplicates, five minutes behind service buses, to ensure enthusiasts could get seats and to allow for photo stops.

On a hot, sunny day the three REs made light of their advancing years and performed faultlessly. At 19.00 they came together at Wells for a last line-up with their drivers and some visiting REs. 1297 alone performed the last run, to Street, on the 376, allowing new owners to collect the other two. As 1297 left Wells, it represented the end of an era, with no Bristol single-deckers left in regular service with any of the companies which began life as Bristol Omnibus.

Top right:
Badgerline Bristol RELL1292 (EHU 386K) leaves Marlborough Street bus station, Bristol, for the last time on 29 July on its way to Street.
PICTURES BY DWR PICTURE LIBRARY

Above right:
1317 (LHT 171L) arrives at Shepton Mallet station, complete with FirstBus logo in the nearside front window.

Above right:
1297 (EHU 391K) passes through Axbridge en route for Weston.

Right:
1317 passes through Calcott on the last Bristol RE journey from Taunton.

SORTING OUT

Once just a municipal operator, Reading Buses has expanded far beyond its old boundaries yet has also pioneered use of environmentally friendly fuels.

JOHN ALDRIDGE reports

...AND STARTING AGAIN

Reading Transport had recognised in the early 1990s that its fleet had to be modernised, and that it needed to 'turn round' the way it had previously done some things. An outsider to the industry, Rod Wilson, had become managing director — he joined from Black & Decker — and a strategic plan was drawn up for the future. The plan included rationalisation of the fleet and also highlighted the point that Reading Transport was not really the major operator in the area: its activities were limited to town services and the London express.

Improving the fleet and expanding

Reading made good progress in improving its fleet, and establishing a buying policy that would simplify spares and maintenance by concentrating on the product of one manufacturer. An annual vehicle replacement plan was adopted, but the first attempts at a standard fleet based on Metrobuses were nullified when MCW ceased bus building. Then in 1991 Bee Line's London express services were acquired, and the following year Bee Line's Reading and Newbury rural services and their vehicles were added as well. This gave Reading a more balanced and rounded operation, a greater share of the local market and an effective monopoly on the London services, and in total added over 60 vehicles to the fleet.

Reading had only recently got rid of the last of its long wheelbase Bristol VR 'Jumbos' with their relatively troublesome transmissions (gearboxes in particular). It had also ridded itself of the last Metro Scanias with their advancing corrosion problems. There had also been two disposals of more recent vehicles, as the two Optare StarRiders were part-exchanged for new Optare MetroRiders, because the automatic gearboxes of their Mercedes-Benz chassis were prone to overheating.

At a stroke the Bee Line purchases put ten StarRiders in the fleet, brought back Bristol VRs in quantity, and added over 20 Leyland National Mark 1s, including some very early examples. The sheer quantities, and the economics of rural operations, meant that the Nationals and the StarRiders would be staying the fleet for some time.

The StarRiders are gradually being fitted with new Allison automatic gearboxes, while so far 14 Leyland Nationals have been re-engined and refurbished at a cost of about £20,000 each. The National interiors have been brought up to DiPTAC standard, and the seats reupholstered in moquette. They have new floors, new Purmo heating systems and Clayton demisting equipment. The engines have been replaced with reconditioned Volvo ones and new Volvo exhaust systems. Reading was one of the first to go for Volvo repowering, which engineering director Paul Shepherd says is the most cost-effective. In an ideal world he would have opted for more expensive new DAF engines. The Bristol VR fleet is now down to four, one of which is in advertising livery.

The Optare connection

The Newbury fleet runs under the Newbury Buses title. The depot has recently been bought (it was previously leased) and is now being improved. The coach side at Newbury has been sorted out, with a secondhand MAN-powered Berkhof Esprit replacing a tired Plaxton-bodied Tiger. Improvements of the Newbury bus fleet is also under way. Finding suitable replacements for the Nationals (which are also in the Reading Buses fleet) was quite difficult. Full-width air-suspended single-

A busy August street scene with Olympians and Metrobuses. There is no exhaust smoke to be seen: all were running for the month on Greenergy diesel fuel.
COLOUR PICTURES BY JOHN ALDRIDGE

READING RETROSPECT

READING IN 1984

Photographed by GERALD MEAD

A characteristic Reading bus still in service in 1984 was this 'Jumbo' Northern Counties-bodied Bristol VRTLL. All had gone by 1991, though four ECW-bodied VRs remain in the fleet today following the takeover of Bee Line's local services.

Above: Metro Scania Metropolitans were also a Reading feature for many years. Standardisation on the type's successor, the Metrobus followed.

Above right: The new standard for the 1980s was the Metrobus, still the mainstay of the Reading fleet.

Leyland Titans were also bought in quantity; Reading was the only fleet customer for the Titan outside London.

deckers with a kneeling facility were wanted, and Optare Vectas were selected: the larger Deltas were too expensive.

The Vectas are regarded as a quality product, and have the same impressive body structure as the Deltas already in the Reading Buses part of the fleet. The Vectas are being depreciated over 15 years, though it is confidently hoped to obtain a 20-year life from them. One feature particularly liked is the luggage pens at floor level. Paul Shepherd points out how hard it is for a parent holding a baby in one arm to use the other arm to fold a pushchair and put it in a relatively high level luggage pen. An admitted slight disadvantage of the Vecta is the two, low, entrance steps.

Another addition to the Newbury fleet is a coach version of the MCW Metrorider. It had passed to Optare when it bought the designs from MCW and subsequently ran with Ipswich Buses for a time. The Metrorider makes a good coach with its large windows, yet can also be used for one-man operation: you could not do that with, say, a Toyota-Caetano because of its central door. This Metrorider, with its turbocharged Cummins engine, is used on a Newbury-Oxford service that runs all day but is mainly a commuter route.

More high profile updating has been that of the London fleet, now known as London Line, and in a livery to two shades of blue. Two DAF-powered Van Hool Alizées were acquired, and also two Plaxton Paramount-bodied Tigers, but Reading would also like to replace the remaining ex-Bee Line Duple 425s in the fleet: four of them remain. Most recent purchase is of two Bova Expresses. They are a low-height coach to express specification, 'at a sensible price which means we could afford the automatic gearbox option', says Paul Shepherd.

Star performers on London Line are, of course, the two air-conditioned Spectra double-deckers. They work well, are popular, and — compared to most double-decker coaches — work out at a much more sensible price.

As will be gathered, vehicle policy generally is to keep with Optare. Seating, heating and other details of their bodywork are liked by passengers. Reading sees great merit in keeping with one supplier, particularly when it is not a huge concern, and is therefore able to be attentive to individual customers. In general, then, next year's orders are a question of selecting the numbers of each type for the on-going replacement programme. Orders for the 1995-96 financial year call for seven Deltas, three Vectas and three MetroRiders.

Engineering aspects

A recent behind-the-scene change has been to the engineering set-up. In conjunction with a new computer management system a much more stringent inspection is carried out on every vehicle every five weeks to full Ministry standard. All is, of course, logged on computer, as are drivers' reports and other detail. The inspectors are each accompanied by a second man who can carry out immediate minor repairs such as changing a light bulb or tightening a handrail. One advantage of the system is that, as the need for any work is detected, an immediate decision is made. A judgement might be to change brake linings in two weeks' time, or even before the bus goes out for the afternoon peak.

The biggest change with the new system is the hours of work: it is all carried out from 09.00 onwards. Reading had to 'buy in' to get staff agreement, though bodyshop and paintshop personnel still start at the old time of 07.30. The later start for most of the workshop staff means they begin working at a time when vehicles are available for inspection and minor work between the peaks, and this has allowed the spares margin for the town services fleet to be cut from 12 to 10%. However, the benefits of a reduced fleet have been masked by improvements in service frequencies to meet competition from Reading Mainline.

Night staff, just four in number, carry out routine servicing and oil, filter and belt changes. To give the fitting staff the same earnings potential as previously, they can work weekends as the emergency call-out crew.

Alternative fuels

It is not so much the vehicles as the fuels they use that have made a name for Reading Transport. It was earlier than most operators in realising that pollution was going to become 'the big issue'. It also felt that if operators were not prepared to try alternative fuels they would never become available. Early experiments were with vegetable-based

One of the impressive London Line air-conditioned Optare Spectras
P. R. WALLIS

A leaflet produced by Reading Buses to promote its use of Greenergy and to campaign for tax incentives to move to cleaner fuels.

Biodiesel; Reading was offered a deal, responded quickly, and the experiment was relatively successful, though the emissions results were slightly disappointing. But biodiesel was too expensive unless there was Government backing. To be successful the whole economic circle for the fuel needs to be studied, including set-aside land, farmers' incomes, and crop yields. Yields would probably increase phenomenally once it became a commercial venture.

The next trial was with a compressed natural gas-engined bus, a Newbury-based MetroRider, fitted with a Rover V8 engine. ERA (no longer in business) did the research and the system has worked well, after a few initial problems. But Cummins now offers a dedicated B-series engine, whereas initially only CNG conversions of existing Bs were available. So the MetroRider might have its engine changed for a new Cummins, with a second MetroRider being converted at the same time. 'Indeed, we'd be happy for the whole Newbury fleet to go gas', says Paul Shepherd. But for that to happen, the county council would have to accept slightly higher tender prices, in return for reduced pollution. Small operators, running old Leyland Leopards, or similar, will always be able to put in the lowest tender bids. But Newbury Buses would provide added value as well as the CNG power — a bus station, inspectors and other features do offer benefits for passengers, though they have to be paid for somehow.

The next move on alternative fuels was in Reading itself, where five Metrobuses are running on Greenergy city diesel for all of 1995. A much bigger trial took place in August, when a joint venture with Reading Borough Council saw the whole fleet run on the fuel, at an extra cost of £10,000. The local authority put £4,000 towards that. Paul Shepherd says the fuel doesn't solve all the problems, but it does reduce smoke and smell, and it has a low sulphur content. Reading is lobbying for the Government to reinstate the fuel tax rebate that operators recently lost, but just for those who use low pollution fuels.

1989 saw the first Optare Deltas arrive. This was the first of the batch of ten

The most eye-catching vehicles in the Reading fleet are undoubtedly the Optare Spectras. One of the batch delivered in 1994 contrasts with a Mainline Routemaster.

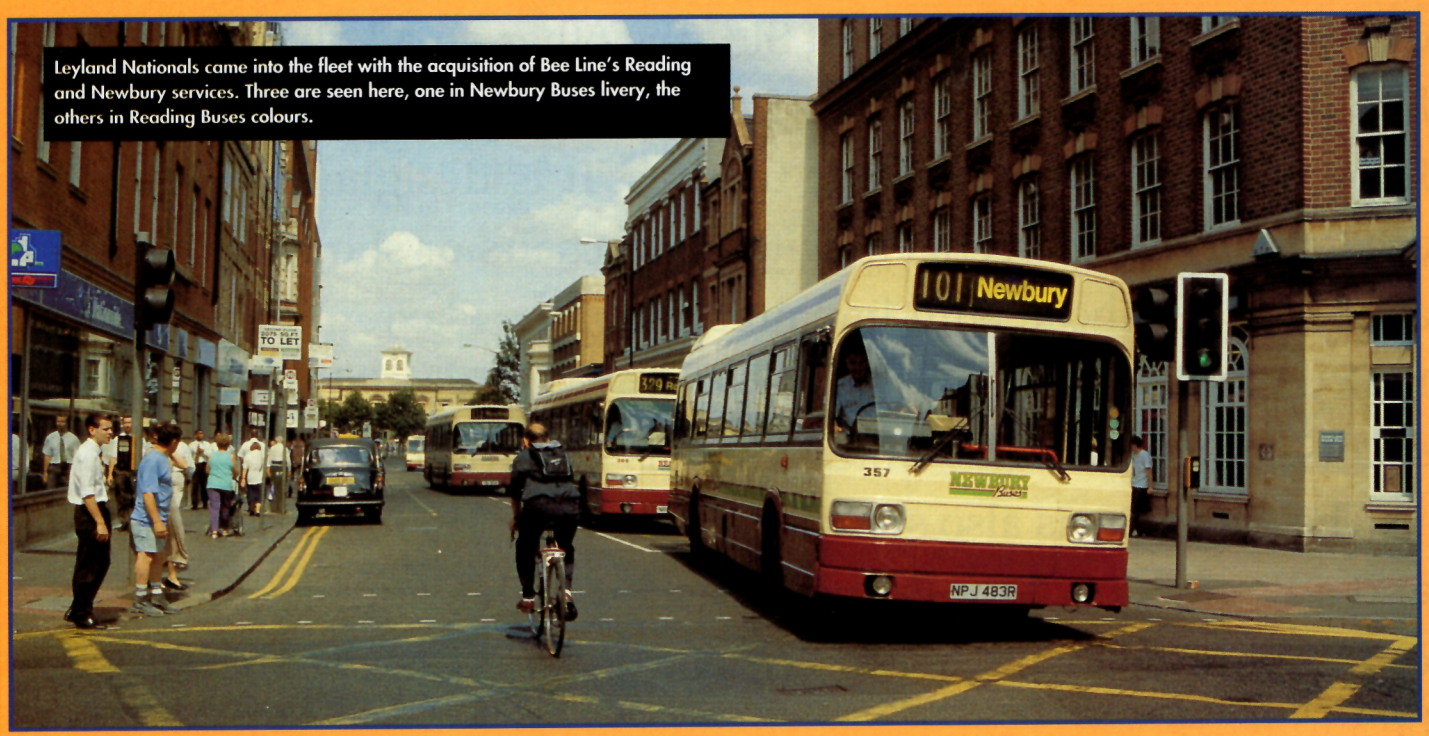
The first Optare bodies in the fleet arrived in 1988, on Leyland Olympian chassis.

The aims of Reading Transport are to improve its emission levels, stay in business and be profitable enough to provide dividends to its shareholder (Reading Borough Council), while buying new vehicles regularly. In the course of this it is also proving the point that small (about 200 vehicles) can be beautiful. You don't have to be part of a large organisation to be successful in today's bus business.

Chosen replacement for Leyland Nationals on rural routes is the Optare Vecta. This one is beginning its 75-minute run on a route shared with Wycombe Bus.

Route 1, competing with Mainline, is named FastLine. It is worked by recent Optare MetroRiders suitably labelled in red on their front dash.

Concern for air quality is a significant one in a town like Reading; here a temporary air quality monitoring station has been set up. It is being passed by an Optare Vecta, a type known for low emissions and performing better than usual in this respect during the August trial of Greenergy low-sulphur diesel across the whole fleet.



Leyland Nationals came into the fleet with the acquisition of Bee Line's Reading and Newbury services. Three are seen here, one in Newbury Buses livery, the others in Reading Buses colours.

Plaxton is launching two exciting new models at Coach & Bus 95, as well as making detail improvements to its existing range.

Set to be one of the show's main attractions is the new tri-axle Excalibur on Volvo's rear-engined B12 chassis. The new model takes the already successful Excalibur into the top realms of luxury coach travel, allowing for high body specifications – including air conditioning – without any compromise on meeting tight weight limits. The tri-axle Excalibur, for Dodsworth of Boroughbridge, also shows the many detailed improvements being made to the entire Plaxton coach range, including the fitting as standard of seat belts, bronze-tinted double-glazing, and high-level brake lights and flashers. Additional driver's rear-view mirrors are now offered as standard.

Colour co-ordinated moquette trim is now used for the underside of the luggage racks, for the interior side panels and on seat backs. The side locker doors feature inbuilt protection panels to absorb the impact from any movement by loose suitcases inside the luggage bay.

The other new model is the low floor Pointer and two are on display, one on a Dennis Dart SLF, the other on a Volvo B6LE. The low-floor Pointer offers a step-free entrance area with a flat saloon floor the front two-thirds of the bus. It is designed to improve accessibility for passengers with push chairs or shopping trolleys as well as for those with impaired mobility. Plaxton is forecasting that this addition to the Pointer range will quickly repeat the success of the current Pointer which is Britain's best-selling bus.

The company is also showing a Premiere 350 for Shaw Hadwin and a Premiere 320 for Epsom Coaches, both featuring the specification improvements to be seen on the Excalibur. There will also be a full-size Verde single-decker for the Go-Ahead Group.

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The September, October and November dated issues of *Modern Railways* will each be carrying an 8 page supplement – make sure you're first with the news by reading *Modern Railways.*

Heathrow Express Supplement
The civil engineering works involved in building the new line to Heathrow, plus the progress so far on the construction of new trains for the airport link are all covered in this 8 page supplement.
See the September-dated issue – on sale 24 August 1995.

Ten Years of Class 59
January 1996 will be the 10th anniversary of the arrival of the first General Motors' Class 59s in Britain. This month's supplement takes a look at how the class has performed so far on stone traffic, and also includes Mendip Rail and National Power's plans for the future with these heavy hauling diesel locomotives.
See the October-dated issue – on sale 28 September 1995.

A Year of Eurostar
In November 1994, the Eurostar service was launched. This supplement investigates how Britain's new international super train has performed in service. *Modern Railways* also reports on Eurostar's plans for the future.
See the November-dated issue – on sale 26 October 1995.

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MODERN RAILWAYS - THE MAGAZINE THAT LOOKS BEHIND THE NEWS

N-REG

With the current upturn in new bus and coach sales there were plenty of new N-registered buses in service during August

Above:
Derby City Transport, which now runs as City Rider with this red, yellow and blue livery, placed some East Lancs-bodied Scania N113s in service, including 164 (N164 VVO).
A. D. HEALEY

Top right:
Derby's neighbour Trent increased its minibus operation with new Optare MetroRiders, including 210 (N210 VRC), seen at Alfreton.
A. D. HEALEY

Above right:
New to Redby, Sunderland, is this Alexander Dash-bodied Volvo B6, N670 VUP, seen at Gateshead.
MARK WILSON

Right:
A new type to London service is the Optare Vecta; Westlink placed five in service on the 371, Kingston-Richmond, displacing Dennis Darts. VA1 (N281 DWY) is seen in Kingston on 2 August.
GEOFF RIXON

Above left:
Stagecoach's new deliveries for Selkent's service 53, Oxford Circus-Plumstead, continue. 323 (N323 HGK) is a Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Olympian.
G. L. INNES

Above:
A new delivery to City of Oxford for Citylink work is this Plaxton Première 350-bodied Volvo B10M, 156 (N156 BFC).
PHILIP R. WALLIS

Left:
National Express upgraded its Cambridge-London service with new N-registered Expressliners from 1 August.
G. L. INNES

Below left:
Seen in Manchester Piccadilly is Finglands 1741 (N741 VBA), one of five Alexander Royale-bodied Volvo Olympians.
R. L. WILSON

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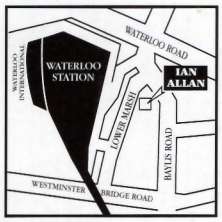

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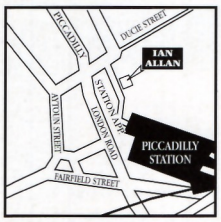

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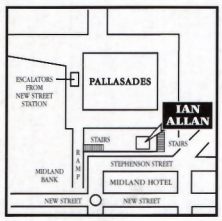

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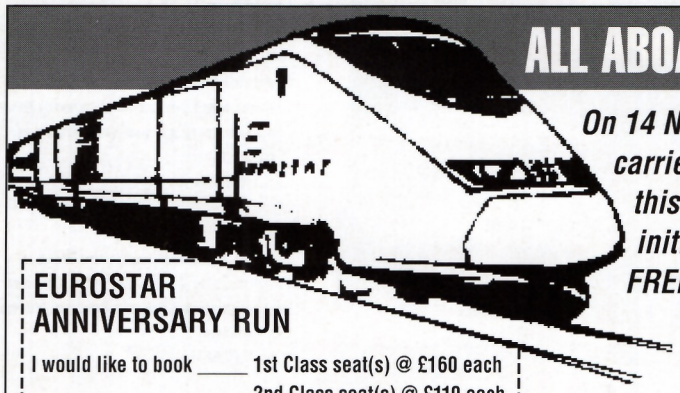

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1995 TRANS-PENNINE RUN

TONY PEART reports on this ever-popular event

Once a regular Trans-Pennine attender in its guise as an exhibition vehicle for Cheshire Constabulary Crosville Bristol L5G SLG147 is now restored in Crosville livery.
PICTURES BY PETER DURHAM

The 27th Trans Pennine Run took place on the gloriously sunny 6 August, with about 280 vehicles taking part. Readers will probably be familiar with the format of this rally, which involves a run of about 80 miles through the most varied scenery imaginable, ranging initially from mill towns like Middleton and Heywood, to a central high Pennine section that always seems to be dominated by the grandly monumental structures erected by the one time Manchester & Leeds Railway, then the great wool towns of Halifax and Bradford before a run through the rolling vistas of the Yorkshire Dales and the final climb into Harrogate.

From about lunch-time onwards vehicles which have taken part are exhibited on the Stray, the huge expanse of greensward which is one of the glories of this elegant town. Most drivers who were questioned said that they had very much enjoyed the journey, though the conjunction of the Trans Pennine Run itself, the usual vintage car rally and a cycle race in the neighbourhood of Hebden Bridge meant that there were some delays in that area.

An Irish visitor

Amongst the buses and coaches taking part this year the show-stealer was probably EZH 26, the 1965 CIE Leyland Leopard/MetSec which David Beilby had entered on behalf of the Transport Enthusiasts' Club of Dublin. Its unusual lines and bright red livery made it conspicuous from afar. If support and accommodation can be found, it may well stay in England for a time, just as the CIE OPD2 did a few years ago. Class T, in which EZH 26 found itself was remarkable for its variety, ranging from the dumpy little series 19 Trojan, MEB 626, exhibited by its original owners, Embling's of Guyhirn, and still used by them on special work from time to time, through the usual Leopards and Reliances which tend to dominate this class (1955 to 1975 single-deckers) to David Roizer's Guernsey Albion Victor, LSV 748, which has a Bedford engine, and two interesting Bedford coaches. OHH 977G is an attractive J2/Plaxton which was new to Irving's of Carlisle, and SB5/Duple TAO 179G also served for a time with Irving's, but has had several other owners. This 1969 vehicle is a praiseworthy preservation project, as, though it represents a whole generation of once-ubiquituous Duple coaches, it is now a rarity.

A newcomer to the rally scene this year is C. J. Birch's handsome former West Riding AEC Reliance/Plaxton, SHL 917, which spent many years in obscurity at Ludlam Street in Bradford in unrestored condition. It was also good to see UJX 920M, the Halifax Plaxton-bodied Leopard of Peter Bates, the indefatigable keeper of the PSV Circle's preserved buses records. It enjoys less of the limelight than David Sayers' MCW-bodied example.

Older single-deckers

Pre-1955 single-deckers were in class B and were similarly varied in shape and style. How stirring it was to see both the ACB-bodied Economic of Whitburn Albion CX39Ns! HUP 236, cared for by the Purvis brothers, has been a familiar and well-loved rally habitué for 20 years or so, but J. Sullivan's KUP 799, made its rally debut earlier this year. It has been superbly restored to as-new condition and won its class at Harrogate. These two impressive and formidable looking Albion Valiants are great rarities in themselves, but it is even more remarkable that they carry the only surviving Associated Coachbuilders bodies.

Two contrasting Leyland PS2s, but both 30-footers, were Ritchie McArdle's fine Burnley, Colne & Nelson example with East Lancs body, CHG 541, looking its usual spruce self in gleaming maroon and cream, and *Ethel*, the lovely Roe-bodied EHL 344 of West Riding, currently resident at the soon to close Dewsbury Bus Museum and recently beautifully repainted. Contrasting likewise were two Leyland PS1s: KUP 949, Maypole Coaches' hard-working Burlingham coach, which served with Ledgards for many years, and BCB 340, an unusual Crossley-bodied bus that is now back with its original owner, Blackburn Borough Transport, looking as smart as ever. Amongst the smaller vehicles in this class were Geoff Lumb's famous Waveney-bodied Guy Wolf from Llandudno, JC 5313, which has completed every Trans Pennine Run but one, when it was mechanically indisposed, and Jack Henley's engaging little Austin K2, PS 1805, with Aberdeen Federated Industries body, which spent its working life in the Shetlands.

Double-deckers

Class A was for pre-1955 double-deckers, and it was worthy of note that all those on view were AEC Regent IIIs of one sort or another, with five different body-builders represented in the six buses in the class. Marc Knott's Morecambe Regent, LTF 254, went only as far as Guiseley, as its owner was working later in the day. The very fine Alexander-bodied CYJ 252 of Dundee Corporation was making its second English foray during the season and

Top:
Now restored at Transperience in Bradford is this fine Halifax Roe-bodied Daimler CVG6.

Above:
There are now two Economic of Whitburn ACB-bodied Albion CX39Ns preserved; KUP 799, made its rally debut earlier this year.

won its class. Its vivid grass green at one end of the row contrasted with the equally vivid 'baby' blue of Bradford's HKW 82 at the other, while between them two of Yorkshire's most spectacular multi-coloured liveries were represented by Halifax BCP 671 and York Pullman JDN 668. The foil to this kaleidoscopic riot was LYR 916, London Transport's RT3496 in Country Area sombre dark green.

Amongst later double-deckers in class S, the least familiar was GJX 331, a Roe-bodied Daimler CVG6 from a small batch operated by Halifax Corporation. This was another bus that made its rally debut earlier in the year, and works for Transperience, the new Transport Discovery Park at Low Moor, which opened in July. One could wish that it had been one of Halifax's almost unique Leyland-engined Daimlers, but GJX 331 looks magnificent anyway.

Once again the class was dominated by AECs, though two of the Routemasters present have Leyland engines. Like Mark Knott, Ashley Blackman was able to take old 'thunderguts', his phenomenally raucous AEC Regent V, ROD 765, only as far as Guiseley before having to go to work. A popular Trans-Pennine regular was Bob Murray's lovingly-cherished Leeds Leyland PD2/11/Roe, UUA 207, which has a rare chassis variant and is also a bus of exceptional refinement and comfort, with the added bonus of a very melodious pneumocyclic transmission. Class winner was another PD2, ABV 33B, an East Lancs-bodied PD2/24 from Blackburn, which is a ubiquitous rally attender and is always very smartly presented. From the GMT Museum came another Daimler CVG6, but 4632 VM currently sports one of the radiator cowls specially produced for the model by Manchester City Transport, not at all elegant, perhaps, but practical as well as distinctive.

A Tilling theme

In recent years the Trans Pennine Run has often had a particular theme, and this year it was Thomas Tilling. The line of former Tilling Group buses and coaches stretched right across the field, and contained more oddities and rarities than one might expect. Some exhibits were very familiar, like CWX 671, the sturdy old Bristol K5G/Roe owned for so many years by Trevor Leach, and now with Keighley & District, successor to its original owner. Likewise familiar was FEL 751D, the Hants & Dorset Bristol MW coach associated for so long with Peter Bramley, with whom it was a consistent award winner. These days it is rallied with continuing success by new owner Keith Wood. Very unfamiliar, however, was XUO 72, another MW6G, but with the earlier style of coach body, and magnificently restored as a bus, the guise in which it worked out its last years with Devon General. It is presented in the unloved poppy-red and white scheme, in which it somehow contrives to look very attractive, and which is authentic for its present condition, of course.

During the 1970s an inveterate Trans Pennine attender was a former Crosville Bristol L5G, LFM 728, which had been converted to a Road Safety Exhibition and was entered by Cheshire Constabulary.

Far left:
Winner of its class was this Dundee Alexander-bodied AEC Regent III.

Left:
Close to the Albion in registration terms is Maycole Coaches' Burlingham-bodied Leyland Tiger PS1, KUP 949.

Needless to say, it was always very smart, spectacularly so, in fact, but it was eventually retired from these duties and has been most fortunately preserved by H. R. Jones of Hawarden in its Crosville condition. It was good to see it again — and it looks just right.

A question of awards

Once more the whole mammoth operation had been overseen by Maurice White, with a team of helpers from the HCVS sections on both sides of the Pennines. David Beilby had produced another magnificent programme, and high standards of former years were worthily upheld. The writer would have one significant reservation, however. There are certain rallies on which winning an award is specially significant. London-Brighton, Trans Lancs, Showbus, Southport-Blackpool, *Leicester Mercury* are all examples that spring immediately to mind. It does not really matter about the standards of judging, which may or may not be suspect from time to time; all these rallies have a special mystique and appeal. Obviously the Trans Pennine, as one of the country's premier events, is such a rally, so it would seem a retrograde, even an eccentric step to dispense with the traditional awards. We mourn the loss of the best vehicle from the County of Cheshire, the best Albion — and so many others. For someone to bring an excellently restored bus all the way from Dundee, to win the class and then to return with a mere rosette does seem a bit stingy. Yes, we all know that suitably qualified judges are difficult to get hold of, that award schemes are equally difficult to manage, that winners crush, mangle or fail to return the trophies, or take them back to the wrong rallies, that competitive rallies can breed bitterness and rancour and that a number of people do not regard vehicle preservation as a competitive activity, anyway. The arguments are familiar, and have been trotted out again and again.

On the other hand there is enormous personal satisfaction and kudos in winning an award at a major rally, and for very many vehicle owners and custodians the competitive aspect, though it involves an incredible amount of hard work in vehicle preparation, gives an extra spice to the day. The 1995 Trans Pennine Run, however, had but two awards proper, being competed for by nearly 300 commercial vehicles of all shapes and sizes. Insult was added to injury by the fact that class winners were decided by the iniquitous so-called self-judging system, though some measure of regulation was introduced by the fact that exhibitors were not expected to judge types of vehicles very different from their own. There were expressions of surprise at some of the results thrown up, and it will be interesting to see whether the present Trans Pennine award system has any effect on the size and quality of next year's entry. Perhaps it will not, as the very special nature of this event make people want to take part in it anyway.

Stealing the show at Harrogate was this CIE C-class Leyland Leopard.

SANDTOFT GATHERING

GRAHAM WISE fulfilled a long-standing ambition to see Sandtoft in full spate

The first time I saw Sandtoft was on a cold mid-week afternoon in April 1984. The gate was open and a couple of volunteers were working on a trolleybus so I took the opportunity to look around the site. What I saw impressed me so much that I determined to return on an operating day or, even better, to the annual Sandtoft Gathering. Well, it took until this year before my intentions could be realised and what I found was even more impressive than I had anticipated.

An established event

The Gathering is now a well established event in the Rally Calendar and has grown steadily over the years to become one of the major happenings in the world of bus preservation. This growth has meant the event has outgrown the Sandtoft site to the extent that the bold decision was taken to hold it on two separate sites this year. At Sandtoft trolleybuses were operating and, lined up on part of the old airfield were non-operating trolleys plus a variety of static motorbuses. The other site — Seven Lakes Leisure Park — at Ealand provided a more traditional bus rally venue where many visiting buses were exhibited. In the sheds at Sandtoft was a good transport bazaar so beloved of enthusiasts. Also at Sandtoft was a real ale tent, refreshments and entertainment by the (very good) Markham Main Band. Over at Ealand entertainment was provided by the Riverside Stompers jazz band.

Both sites were linked by an efficient free bus service for which South Yorkshire PTE usefully provided a good timetable leaflet to its usual design. A wheelchair-accessible bus was also thoughtfully provided between the sites plus to and from Crowle railway station, and there was plenty of opportunity for rides on many types of preserved buses.

The heat of the day

Whilst at home the day began cloudy and overcast the journey north saw the sun break through with clear skies developing. It was obviously going to be hot — and it was — and at mid-morning very humid as well. Hats and plenty to drink were the order of the day. There were plenty of buses to ride on both between sites and trolleybuses at Sandtoft but upstairs these were like ovens, even with all windows open. The lucky ones were able to ride on ex-Grimsby Cleethorpes Transport open-top AEC Bridgemaster 133 (NJV 995) which was provided by the Thomson Barrett Organisation of Goole.

The standard of entries was very high and it was obvious that much care and long hours had gone into the preparation of just about everything on show, even those vehicles still in process of restoration. Outstanding among them were the Derby utility trolleybus 172 (RC 8472) and the City of Oxford Renown 342 (342 TJO), both of which deservedly won prizes. In all there were 29 awards so everyone had a good chance of winning something. The overall winner was Keith Wood's Hants & Dorset MW6G/ECW FEL 751 which also won the Bristol Vehicles award and Preserved PSVs over nine years old from the SE Traffic Area Award. And all this for a vehicle owned for less than a year. There's commitment for you.

A well-known Yorkshire-based preserved bus is Geoff Lumb's fine 1938 Llandudno Guy Wolf, JC 5313. It was used at Sandtoft to promote its owner's new book, 'British Trolleybuses 1911-1972'.

Though the Gathering attracts a good number of visiting buses, Sandtoft is really all about trolleybuses; here Derby 172, a 1944 Sunbeam W in wartime livery, leads a line of vehicles, including a fine Reading six-wheeler and three Bradford trolleybuses.
PICTURES BY THE AUTHOR

There was, as one would expect, a good representation of local vehicles such as Lincolnshire Road Car prewar and modern Tigers, an SC4LK and a Series 3 VRT; two Hull Atlanteans plus a Reliance (WAT 164); an East Yorkshire Bedford OB and Bridgemaster; a Doncaster Regal, Regent, Titan, Daimler CVD6 and CVG6 and Royal Tiger Cub; Grimsby-Cleethorpes single-deck Fleetline GEE 418D plus representatives of Rossie Motors and Felix.

From further afield came such things as J. Dennis Say's Western National SUL4A (though it now lives along the road at Goole), Keith Dennison's Maidstone & District Cavalier-bodied Reliance, Adrian Henson's newly restored Brighton & Hove RELL6G PPM 206G, Paul Almeroth's Routemaster 459 CLT and the Grey Cars Reliance 890 ADV owned by M. Gibbons of West Byfleet. There were many others to numerous to mention but all worthy entrants.

Banished for the day to a position behind a barn on the airfield were the unrestored trolleybuses — mostly from Bradford — which reside at Sandtoft. They were worth a good look. Some will run one day but some are unlikely candidates for restoration. They do, however, provide an excellent pool of spare parts. An unexpected sight among these was single-deck ex-Liège (Belgium) trolleybus 425 in need of a lot of attention. Also interesting but parked elsewhere was ex-Cardiff BUT 9641T single-decker KBO 961. One-and-a-half-deck Aachen 22 and little Limoges 5 gained quite a lot of attention but one felt they deserved more — there doesn't seem to be much interest here in foreign vehicles. Even the ex-Lisbon Regal 11-14-49 did not receive much attention.

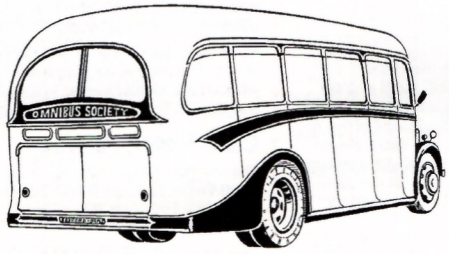
What did gain people's interest was the long line of buses and trolleys parked at Sandtoft between the running area and the unrestored vehicles mentioned above. Some were fully restored like Maidstone trolleybus 56 (GKP 511) whilst others were at varying stages. Most notable was Cleethorpes 54 (FW 8990) on which work steadily progresses and which won the award for the Sandtoft vehicle having had the most work carried out on it in the past year.

It was a long, hot day out but worth every minute. I didn't envy the judges in their task as they contended with the heat and the extremely high standards they had to assess. Gary Nolan of East Midland Motor Services had the easy job — he just presented the prizes!

Above:
Work continues on restoring trolleybuses at Sandtoft; a long-term project, now showing real signs of progress, is Cleethorpes 54 (FW 8990), one of the batch of 10 AECs with Park Royal bodywork which inaugurated trolleybus operation in Cleethorpes in 1937.

Left:
A fine vehicle at Sandtoft was this Walter Alexander Leyland Titan TD7 of 1940.

Not always backward looking, The Omnibus Society keeps you abreast of present and future trends



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Badgerline FB

Acquisitions are Leyland Tiger/Alexander TE DP53F 2211-7 (HHJ 372/5/6/8/80Y, A692/6 OHJ). However, two have been drafted away to Thamesway, 2216 to Western National also.

Bagnall, Swadlincote

An interesting arrival is Leyland Titan B15 prototype NHG 732P.

Bee Line Buzz BB

Now delivered are Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander (Belfast) B25F 120-5 (M120-5 YCM), whilst acquisitions are of Dodge S46/Northern Counties B22F 49 (D449 LNA), Leyland National 11351A/1R/B49F 230/4/41/5/51 (UHG 731/51R, ACW 764R, CBV 791/2S) and 10351A/1R/B41F 320/6 (GHU 643N, NPK 259R) from North Western and Dodge S46 15 (D415 NNA) from South Lancashire, St Helens.

Withdrawals are of Leyland Olympians 601/2/9-11/5/55 (DBV 135/6Y, B148-50/5 TRN, B960 WRN, PFM 128Y) and MCW Metrobuses 769/73/9/81/3/9/93/4/8/9 (LOA 428X, BOK 36, 51/3, 90V, GOG 139/41W, LOA 416/9X). 601/2/9-11/5/6/55 and 727/94 are all now with Liverline, 729/73/9/81/3/9/93/8/9 with North Western and 769 (GOG 168W) with Stevensons.

A new livery of allover red with City Plus fleetnames has made an appearance on minibuses 6 and 15 (D406/15 NNA).

Blackburn Transport

New are Optare MetroRider MR15/B31F 627/8 (M627/8 WBV) and MR17/B29F 629-32 (M629/30 WBV, M631/2 WFR), all to Lancashire County Council tendered vehicle specification.

B49F National Greenways YEV 317/24S are numbered 429/30 respectively, earlier TOF 694S and TJN 505R are now 427/8 respectively. From Dodsworth of Boroughbridge comes Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton C53F 327 (H724 VWU).

Withdrawals are Leyland Atlanteans 115/7/24 (PCW 115P, CBV 117/24S).

Blackpool Transport

Leyland Atlanteans 331-7 (AHG 331-7V) are now reinstated for the summer, 331 as a new overall advertisement sponsored by the Area Health Authority.

HandyBus-liveried Optare MetroRider demonstrator 584 (M924 TYG) is now back from its Fylde foray, fleet strength being further enhanced by occasional use of Leyland Titan PD2 open-topper 532 (DHC 784E) on service 21 to Blackpool Zoo this season.

Blue Admiral TR

Acquired are Iveco 59.12/Mellor Duet B26D 2022/8/82 (K723/9 UTT, K633 XOD) ex-Thames Transit. Ousted are Ford Transits 637/53 (D637/53 NOD, D789 NDV), which went to Bayline on the day of their withdrawal. Interestingly, former Portsmouth Leyland Atlantean/Alexander 287 (XTP 287L) is on loan to Devon General at Exeter for use at special events, though still held in 'for disposal' status.

Blue Bus, Horwich

The latest rebody into traffic is Volvo B58 PYD 984V. Leyland Leopards 19, 49 (BWU 691H, EBZ 5229) have been withdrawn.

Brewers FB

Ten dual-purpose Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer are on order, to become 609-18 and intended for services X1/X2 (Cardiff-Swansea/Porthcawl via Bridgend).

In from Eastern National are Mercedes-Benz L608D/Reeve Burgess B20F C478/81 BHY, whilst withdrawals are of Leyland Leopard 144 (JWE 244W), Leopard rebuild 165 (ROG 550Y) and Leyland Nationals 797/9 (TWN 797/9S) and 808 (WWN 808T). 144/65 are now with Western National.

Brighton & Hove GA

The first of the Dennis Darts were due for mid-July delivery, following inspection of one chassis at Conway Street earlier. 1 (N501 KCD) took part in Dennis centenary celebrations at Wroughton Airfield near Swindon.

Newly-acquired Leyland Tiger/Plaxton Paramount 510 (F679 OVK) is to C51Ft layout, twin 511 (FCU 190) is C46Ft, not as previously reported.

Loaned Bristol VRT/SL3 474 (HUD 474S) was withdrawn in late June, expected to go for scrap. Convertible open-top VRT 594 (TNJ 994S) and Leyland Atlantean 3455 (AUP 355W) have been delicensed.

British Airways

New are Dennis Lance SLF/Berkhof M957-68 SDP for inter-terminal shuttle work at Heathrow.

Brylaine Travel, Boston

Ex-Bournemouth Daimler Fleetline DLJ 119L has been withdrawn and scrapped as has Bedford YRT XRR 598M, whilst Ford R1114 SNF 609R is under cannibalisation before scrapping also. Former Southdown R1114 PUF 259M remains out of use at Skegness, having not worked for two years. Newer R1115 BSS 527Y has been destroyed after catching fire, but KSU 363 (*F327 YTG*) is now back in traffic after having been stolen and used to ram-raid an electrical store near Boston.

Budget Busway, Colchester

As noted in Geoff Mills' article in *Buses* September, operations abruptly ceased on 28 July, the collection of assorted Leyland Nationals being dealt with by a dealer in Brighton.

Leyland National MBZ 7141 was originally *RYJ 769R* and not as previously stated.

Bullock, Cheadle

Four Volvo B6/East Lancs are on order. Further deliveries are Volvo B10M/Caetano M781 NBA and Dennis Javelin/Plaxton M782-5 NBA. Acquired from Manchester Airport is 23-year old Leyland National WFM 819L, expected to be used as a source of spares for a pair of GFJ-N registered examples under preparation for use. Ex-Rose Hill of Marple Leyland National BYW 362V is also under preparation.

Withdrawals are of Leyland Fleetline YNA 294M (older sister WWH 35L having been scrapped by the company on site), Dennis Javelins G422 SNF, J100 BUL, Leyland Tiger E161 TVR, Leyland Leopard WDB 390X and Ford WDB 392X.

Burnley & Pendle

The Neoplan coach H166 RHE is now in traffic with fleetnumber 1.

Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4R 58 (VFV 8V) has been withdrawn sold to Happy Days of Woodseaves and sadly the preserved Leyland Tiger Cub ex-driver trainer 325 (HHG 25) has been sold.

Optare MetroRiders 75-77 (K75 XCW, J176/7 MCW) are now renumbered 175-7. Leyland Tiger coaches 4, 5 (GSU 554, XSU 905) and Mercedes-Benz 709D minicoach 6 (XSU 906) are now renumbered 54-56 respectively.

Dual-purpose Volvo Citybus 114 (H114 ABV) is now in full Viscount Central two-tone grey livery, having previously worn an overall advertisement for VC. Volvo B10M-55/Alexander DP saloons 61-6 (E61-6 JFV) are to be downgraded with bus seating.

Busways ST

For completeness, it should be recorded under this heading that 507/65 (MVK 507/65R), 801/2/4/8 (OCU 802R etc), 1311-20 (L238 CCW, L242-7/50/49 CCK), 1604/5 (TPJ 55, 60S), 1665-78 (J225-33 JJR, K341-45 PJR), 2007-11 (F494/5 NTR, D606/4/7 MKH), 2102-4/7/8/10 (PES 189/90Y, A940 XGG, PSO 179W, CSO 388Y, VSS 3X) and 2141-6 (D33 UAO, D523/38/26/35/43 RCK) are now withdrawn.

Of these, 1311-20, 1663-78, 2009-11, 2102/7/10/41-6 are now transferred to Cleveland Transit, whilst North East Bus Breakers, Annfield Plain (dealer) took 413/4 (JFT 413/4X — later appearing with Bullock, Cheadle), 507/65, 1651/4 (F651/4 KNL) and 2101 (PES 188Y) and PVS, Barnsley (dealer) 800/5/6/11/3/36 (OCU 800/5/6/11/3R, RCU 836S).

No sooner had mention of livery been made in *Buses* July, than a reverse decision was locally made to jettison local identity liveries in favour of the ubiquitous Stagecoach scheme, by way of a new image.

C&M Travel, Aintree

The first new saloons for this company are Volvo B10B/Wright 2001/2/4 (M647/8/50 YLV).

Cambus CH

New are 518-20 (N519-20 XER), Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Olympians which entered service from Cambridge on 29 August.

Volvo B10L YV3R54F/Alexander Ultra B45F demonstrator M394 MRW was on loan in early July and used on the Park & Ride service. Ugly duckling Alexander coach-bodied Olympian 506 (B144 GSC) has been sold to a dealer.

Brighton & Hove is now receiving its Marshall-bodied Dennis Darts; 4 (N504 KCD) is seen in North Street, Brighton.
M. E. LYONS

Body type

B	Single-deck bus
C	Coach
DP	Dual purpose, usually coach seats/bus shell
H	Double-decker
L	Lowbridge double-decker (ie with side sunken gangway upstairs. All other types, with conventional gangways are H [Highbridge] regardless of overall height)
O	Open-top
CO	Convertible open-top

Seating capacity

(For double-deckers this is shown with the upper-deck capacity first, eg 43/30, indicating 43 'over' 30. Where these are not known a total figure is given).

Door position

F	Front
R	Rear
C	Centre
D	Dual doors

Where platform doors are fitted where these would not normally figure, usually on a rear entrance bus, this is indicated by D after the door position. The letter 't' after the door indicates the provision of a toilet whilst L after the door position shows that a wheelchair lift is fitted.

Re-registrations

Re-registered vehicles are shown with their current registration, in normal type. Previous registrations then follow in *italic* type, with most recent given next, working backward in time to original mark, which is shown last.

For example, Fylde Leyland Leopard 29 (YNJ 434, *HRN 97N*); Southend Leyland Olympian coach 256 (A110 FDL, *WDL 748, A701 DDL*) this was originally A701 DDL, then WDL 748 and is currently A110 FDL.

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Capital Citybus

New for evaluation is 300 (M647 RCP), a DAF DB250/Northern Counties Palatine II H47/30F, on loan for six months and in full livery. It has 'proper' standard seating, rather than unwelcoming plastic seats with thin padded patches as on earlier variants; consequently, it entered traffic on Coastliner excursions.

Acquisitions are Ford Transit 190D/Carlyle B16F 827 (C427 AHT) from Bristol CityLine and twin 828 (C198 KBH) formerly Luton & District. Both are for use as staff shuttles.

Castleways, Winchcombe

New is Dennis Dart 9.8SDL3054/Plaxton Pointer B40F M151 HDD.

Chalkwell, Sittingbourne

Acquired from Sovereign is Leyland National 10351B/1R/B41F EPD 533V, being rebuilt with a front end incorporating Plaxton Paramount headlamps and lower skirt. It will be re-registered before use. Meanwhile, SJK 9385 is now re-registered VIB 9308, H46 FNK is now VIB 9460 and E482 CNM is now VIB 9485.

The company is welcomed as a welcome regular provider of source data for Fleet News.

Cheltenham District ST

New are 708-10 (M708-10 JDG), Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander (Belfast) B25F, but the seventh of this batch has been diverted to Stroud Valleys as its 704, its replacement being similar 686 (L686 CDD) from Cheltenham & Gloucester stock.

MCW Metrorider 666 (E666 JAD) has been on loan to Swindon & District.

The last L608D in Metro livery is now in corporate stripes and is 649, whilst 647/8 (C591/3 SHC) have been sold to Western Scottish. Many Metroriders from this group of companies are due for early withdrawal, some being earmarked for Wilts & Dorset, a keen supporter of the breed.

Readers with a particular interest in Cheltenham District, Cheltenham & Gloucester, Swindon & District and neighbouring independents will find the monthly newsletters of the Cheltenham Bus Preservation Group *The Venturer*, kindly now made available to Fleet News of interest. Preservation is actively undertaken by the Group, having a Bristol RE (1003) and the wellknown Albion Venturer. Send an SAE to the Secretary, Mike Hilltout, 39 Pecked Lane, Bishops Cleeve for details.

Cheltenham & Gloucester ST

Acquired is MCW Metrorider MF150/102/B25F 601 (F53 RFS) from Swindon & District and is being fitted with seatbelts for 'schools service' 188 at Cirencester. Also acquired is Leyland National NL106AL11/1R/B44F 393 (LFR 873X) from G&G, Leamington Spa and, for use as a driver trainer, **Seddon Pennine VII**/Alexander DT6 (XSD 603T) from Western Scottish.

Swindon & District Bristol VRT/SL3s 216/20 (XDV 606S, VOD 598S) have been on loan.

Withdrawals are Leyland Nationals 337/47 (NOE 555R, VEU 228T), the latter now with Trent and Mercedes-Benz 709D 686 (L686 CDD), now with Cheltenham District (qv).

Chesterfield Transport ST

Acquisitions are DAF SB3000/Van Hool C51Ft 198 (K546 RJX) from Hallmark of Luton and similar 199 (L557 EHD) from Burton, Fullbeck.

Now withdrawn are Leyland Fleetlines 140/1 (NKY 140/1R), Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 90/8 (E90/8 YWB) and Freight Rover Sherpa D139 NON. 90 is now with Whites of Calver, 98 transferred to Retford & District, 140/1 passing to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Circle Line, Gloucester ST

Courtesy of the PSV Circle, the opening fleet as at Stagecoach acquisition comprised Bristol VRT/SL3/ECW LEU 261/6/7P, OBD 842P, MOU 740R, NFB 114R, NWS 289R, PPH 468R, PEU 515R, WBD 875S, PHY 693S, REU 310S; Leyland Fleetline/MCW OJD 199R; Leyland National NFB 603R, PHW 987S; Leyland Leopard/Alexander KKW 65P; Leyland Leopard/Willowbrook LOA 838X; Leyland Cub 335/Wadham Stringer LUL 511X, A469 TUV, C738 CUC; Cub 435/Wadham Stringer C693/4/6/7 VAD; Dodge G10/Wadham Stringer DNE 545Y; Fiat 79.14/Reeve Burgess D604/5 HTC; Freight Rover Sherpa/Dormobile D581 VBV; Sherpa/Carlyle E102 OUH; Seddon Pennine VII/Alexander ASD 841T, BSD 848T, SSX 598V; Volvo B58-61/Duple KRW 532V; Leyland Tiger/Plaxton SND 710X; Leyland Tiger/Duple WLT 713 (*B108 HAO*); Ford Transit/Dormobile B436/9/43/50 WTC, C480/99 BFB and Transit/Carlyle B475 YEU.

Cumberland ST

An interesting acquisition is Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXB/ECW O43/31F 2075 (XRR 175S) from Ribble for use on service 79 (Keswick-Seatoller) from Penrith depot. Also from Ribble are Volvo B10M-61/Plaxton C48Ft 159/60 (LJY 145, YDG 616, *D205/6 LWX*), acquired by this fleet before in August 1990 from Wallace Arnold before passing to Ribble in May 1993. From Grimsby-Cleethorpes Transport come Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3RZ/Duple Caribbean 2 C48Ft 112-4 — to be confirmed as PSU 788/75/87 (*B146/8 ACK, C495 LJV*). Additionally, Dennis Javelin 11SDA2133/Plaxton Interurban DP47F 152 (L152 BFV) has been in use in the Barrow area from Morecambe depot.

Now withdrawn are Volvo B10Ms 149/50/7 (IIL 3503/5, WVT 618) now with East Kent

DalyBus, Eccles

The last day of operation was 12 April, last vehicles in use being M115 XLV on service 42 and M116 XLV on 45 and 70. C825 CBU, E350 UOH, E647 DCK, F129 KAO, F229 BAX, G144/5 LRM and H721 LOL were also active during the day. E80 PUH was delicensed at the end of March and was out of use and all the above apart from F229 BAX have since been on hire to GM Buses North owing to a minibus shortage.

Eastbourne Buses

Interestingly, former Brighton Leyland Titan PD3/4/Metro-Cammell-Laird 34 (MCD 134F), latterly seen in service on the Isle of Wight and in London, was inspected in July with a view to possible use on the Beachy Head service, but was found to have suffered structural corrosion and so sadly this was not to be.

The Northampton Daimler CVG6/Roe 267 (JVV 267G) has been repainted in full Northampton colours (without fleetnames) and is seeing regular use on schools services in the Pevensey area although is apparently due for return to its native town soon. Local Titan PD2 82 (DHC 782E) has also made itself useful recently on schools work.

Eastern National FB

Further new Dennis Darts are 823-30 (N823-30 APU), ready and in traffic on 1 August based on Chelmsford's Maldon outstation. They have electronic side and rear numeral display repeaters. This batch is expected to see the elimination of the Leyland National from Chelmsford (and its outstations).

In rather bizarre fashion during this hot summer both open-top Bristol VRT/SLs have languished out of use in store, open-top services being maintained by Leyland Nationals! Fortunately, one Bristol KSW5G open-topper, usually 2384 (WNO 480), is allocated to the Sunday Suffolk County Council 651 service to Walberswick (near Lowestoft) — a mammoth 3hr 10min trek, the other, 2383 (WNO 479) is proving a popular attender at selected special events.

The three D-registered Leyland Olympian coaches, 4510-2 (D510-2 PPU) are now all at Chelmsford. The last three Leyland National 2s reported active are 1933 (MHJ 729V) at Colchester, 1935 (MHJ 731V) at Clacton and 1940 (KEP 829X) at Chelmsford, 1925 (MHJ 721V) being delicensed after failure. The cannibalised remains of Leyland National 1843 (WJN 563S) were towed away from Chelmsford in July. Cannibalised Mercedes-Benz 200/1 (C200/1 HJN), Leyland National 1841 (WJN 561S) and Bristol VRT/SL3 3070 (KOO 788V) were dumped at Clacton in July, 200 and 3070 being accident victims.

Metal fleetnumber plates, not fitted to new and acquired vehicles for some time, are now few in number, with 1112/21, 1425/8/9, 1832/3/50/1/63/70/4/99, 1921, 3071/2/6-9/83/92-4, 3106/12/27, 3500/1 retaining them at least.

Stalwart 1966 Bristol Lodekka FLF6Gs 2875/7 (STW 763/5D) were noted in Luzern, Switzerland on two successive days by your columnist in August, both still in very fine fettle under the care of Top Deck Travel. It is reported that next year may be the last in which the converted Lodekkas 'deckerhomes' may be allowed operation within the EC. It is worth noting that the small veteran LD6G fleet *still* operates 'Overland' holiday treks to Nepal, amongst other places, the vehicles rarely, if ever, returning to the UK.

East Kent ST

Deliveries comprise Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Première 350 Expressliner 2 C49Ft 8913-8 (M913-8 WJK) delivered to Dover (8914/5 unregistered), B10M-62/Plaxton C53F 8404-9 (M404-9 BFG) and C49Ft 8410 (M410 BFG) at Thanet, the latter with demountable toilet/servery; Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander (Belfast) B25F 889/90 (M889/90 ECD) and Volvo B10M-55/Alexander PS DP48F 639 (M639 ECD). Five PSs were originally due, but these were diverted to Hampshire Bus as its 665/7-70 (M665 ECD etc) at Basingstoke in May. The current delivery of new vehicles will have seen a creditable 25% of the fleet renewed within the past year.

Now withdrawn for disposal are Bristol VRT/SL3 7024 (PJJ 24S) and Volvo B10M-60s 8902/4-8 (G902 PKK etc). All of Dover's G-registered B10Ms is being returned to Plaxton, Sheffield (dealer).

Only 34 double-deckers now remain in East Kent livery, along with just three saloons (44 minis remaining in Minilink colours), as at July. Iveco 1 is a new overall advertisement for S&S Garages, Ramsgate & Margate. Coaches 1105/6 now carry side window vinyls for the 'Dickensian X64' service, 1105/6/8 now having passenger lap belts fitted. Stored Stagecoach South Leyland National 183 (UFX 853S) has been in use as a mobile office at Station Road, Ashford in June.

Daimler Fleetline RFN 962G has been noted in use as a playbus at the Alston Arms pub at Longridge in a cream/black livery. AEC Regent V GJG 755D has been noted in Reading in allover blue, apparently converted into a caravan.

Loaned Volvo/Plaxton Expressliner G327 PEW was owned by Plaxton, Sheffield (dealer).

East London ST

Acquisitions are Selkent's Dennis Lance 11SDA3101/Alexander B39D LA1-16 (J101-16 WSC), primarily intended to work service 145 from Barking once re-liveried. Also acquired is Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton Paramount 3500 III C50F VP3 (H637 UWR), latterly used by Metroline. It has been on loan to Eastbourne Buses.

Volvo B10L/Alexander Ultra M394 MRW has been on loan at Upton Park, used a trifle on service 101. Northern Counties-bodied Volvo B10M 662 (M662 ECD) has been active on service 247, but 663/4 (M663/4 ECD) have been used as trainers, 665/7-70 (M665 ECD etc) being despatched to Hampshire Bus. East Midland Volvo B6s 453-8 have now gone to GM Buses South.

RM1527 (527 CLT), used by BBC TV for *East Enders*, is now back in normal service.

Group codes

BB — British Bus
BL — Blazefield Holdings
CH — CHL (Cambus Holdings)
CW — Cowie Group
EY — EYMS Group
FB — First Bus
GA — Go-Ahead Group
ML — Mainline Group
MT — MTL Holdings
QD — Q-Drive
ST — Stagecoach Holdings
TR — Transit Holdings
WM — West Midlands Travel
YT — Yorkshire Traction

Far left:
East Kent's latest coaches are in East Kent's own livery rather than Stagecoach livery, as shown by this Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10M.
NICK COLEMAN

Left:
Kentish Bus is adopting this new livery for its commercial operations; the first vehicles so painted are ex-R&I Dennis Darts.
NICK COLEMAN

East Surrey, South Godstone

Bedford YMT 10 (GPA 620V) is withdrawn.

East Yorkshire EY

Twenty Volvo Olympians are on order, six, due about now, with Northern Counties Palatine II bodywork as 584-9 and 14 with Alexander Royale as 590-603, due in October/November.

The latest livery now features a much darker shade of red, described as a deep maroon, not unlike Edinburgh's madder, rather than the bright crimson used hitherto, with fleetnames now in a lighter shade of gold. Leyland Olympian 555, illustrated in Fleet News June, is also now in maroon, as are repainted Olympians 540/56/7/9, ex-Cleveland Leyland Atlantean 931 and the front end of overall-advert Bristol VRT/SL3 527. Leyland Royal Tiger 15 is now in full Connor & Graham livery.

Acquisitions are Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R/Plaxton C49Ft 45 (F58 YCW) from Fishwick, Leyland; TRCTL11/3ARZ/Plaxton C53F 69 (IIL 7073, *F772 GNA*) from Skills, Nottingham and TRCTL11/3RZ/Duple C51Ft 52 (152 FRH, *E52 URH*) from Finglands.

Tiger/Plaxton 11 (B111 WAT) is now re-registered 794 EYD and Leyland Royal Tiger 16 (794 EYD, *C647 HRH, 80 EYC, C116 DRH*) is now C474 JAT, the latter now withdrawn and sold to Rowland of North Dalton.

Express Motors, Hulland

This operator is thought to be unique in that its entire rolling stock comprises Bristol LHs. Dayglo blinds and Wayfarer ticket equipment is used.

Acquisitions are Bristol LH6L/ECW B45F OJD 66R from Shaftesbury & District and twin OJD 89R from Coombes, Weston-Super-Mare, along with LHS6L/Plaxton Supreme C33F YVW 902S ex-Hemyock, Devon. Others in stock are LH6L/ECW B43F KJD 421P ex-Robson, Thornaby, LH6L/Plaxton C43F SFJ 114R ex-Western National and LHS6L/ECW B35F FBV 271W ex-Blandford Bus.

The sole non-LH in this fleet, Leyland National GHU 646N, was withdrawn after accident damage. However, Dodge S56/Northern Counties B22F C812 CBU has been on loan from Peak Bus.

Fareway, Kirkby MT

New are Volvo B10B-50/Wright B49F 6547-54/6/7 (M547 WTJ etc). From main Merseyside stock come Leyland Fleetline FE30AGR/MCW H43/32F 0394-7 (VCU 394-7T).

Finglands, Manchester EY

Five Alexander Royale-bodied Volvo Olympians entered service in August, one of which is 1741 (N741 VBA). They replace Leyland Atlanteans and a Daimler Fleetline.

Ford, Althorne

New is Dennis Javelin/Caetano Algarve C56F M486 HBC.

Fylde Transport

Leyland Atlantean 48 (ARH 304K) is still under preparation as an open-topper, whilst 56 (WRH 291J) has not been at work either since its winter use as a driver trainer.

Atlantean 42 (HIL 5342) is a new overall advertisement for *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, but with front in new livery. 95 (RHG 95T) wears a full overall for the Area Health Authority. 30-year old ex-Salford Atlantean 51 (DBA 227C) is now in latest blue and cream livery but with the yellow front for promenade service. The new corporate blue/cream has not been inviting as much appreciation as the former two-tone livery, which had evolved into a very pleasant style.

GM Buses North

New are Dennis Dart/Northern Counties 101-8 (M101-8 RRJ), whilst MCW Metrorider 1590 (E266 REP) has been withdrawn and sold to Citibus, accident victim Leyland Atlantean 7707 (RJA 707R) and un-numbered Freight Rover Sherpa H721 LOL being taken out of stock, H721 returning to PSV Products, Eccles off-loan.

Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties 3071 (B71 PJA) and MCW Metrobus 5033 (MRJ 33W) have been refurbished and now feature bus seating in their upper saloons, coach seats in the lower (in 40/30 layout).

GM Buses South

Additions to stock are Volvo B6-50/Alexander Dash DP40F 301-4 (M741-4 PRS) loaned from Ribble, B40F 320 (M460 XHE) also on loan, from East Midland. 20 are due in all, expected to be former Busways/Ribble 301-10 (M741-6, 847, 748-50 PRS), East Midland 311/2/4-20 (M461/2/54-60 XHE) and 313 (M846 HDF) from Cheltenham District, all on loan from Stagecoach Holdings.

Acquisitions are Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton F256 BHF (*NXI 9003*) from Express Travel, Perth; B10M-60/Plaxton C53F F21 HGG from Charity of Thringstone and similar G53-6 RGG from Fishwick, Leyland.

Leyland National 256 (FNS 161T) is now re-registered SJI 2054.

Withdrawals have now claimed Leyland Nationals 194/9 (ABA 19, 24T), MCW Metrorider 1660 (D660 NNE) and Leyland Atlanteans 7718/78 (RJA 718R, UNA 778S), 7878 (WVM 878S), 7924/39 (ANC 924T, BNC 939T).

Leyland Atlanteans 7564 (JND 998N) and 7845 (UNA 845S) and Dennis Domino 1765 (C765 YBA) were taken into stock in withdrawn condition and are now heavily cannibalised.

Go-Ahead Northern GA

New are DAF SB220LC/Optare Delta B49F 4789-93 (M789-93 LCU) for Gateshead & District at Gateshead, in red, white and blue livery. In National Express livery are new Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Expressliner C49Ft 7058/9 (M58/9 LBB) based initially at Chester-le-Street but due to move (with National Express operations) to Philadelphia. Acquired by Low Fell Coaches is Volvo B10B/Alexander Strider B51F 4812 (L212 KEF) from OK Travel.

Now withdrawn are Leyland Atlanteans 3459/60/77 (AUP 359W etc), Shaws Coaches Atlantean 3708 (YNL 208V) and Metro Buses Ford Transit 190D 330 (C428 AHT). 3459/60/77 and 3548 (MBR 448T) are now with OK Travel, Leyland Tiger 7048 (C679 OVK) has passed to Brighton & Hove and Shaws Coaches 7050/1 (EIB 1647, 8955) to Oxford as its 125/6.

Operation of the Newcastle-North Shields Scandinavian ferry connecting services has passed to OK Travel, along with the pair of specially-adapted former Tyne & Wear Leyland Atlanteans, 3685 and 3700 (VFT 185, 200T). Responsibility for operation and maintenance of Low Fell Coaches and Tyne Rider fleets has also been assigned to OK Travel, with all vehicles and personnel relocated to its Team Valley depot.

Gypsy Queen Leyland Tiger 7031 (JSK 327, *E131 CTN*) is now again re-registered to E183 GRG.

Driver trainer Bristol VRT T507 (RCN 167N) and Leyland Atlantean T518 (AUP 352W) have been withdrawn and sold to North East Bus Breakers, Annfield Plain (dealer), probably for scrap, along with previously withdrawn and partially cannibalised Iveco 49.10s 312/5 (F312/5 MTN), and MCW Metrobuses 3487/97 (DVK 487/97W).

MCW Metrobus MkII 3750 (C750 OCN) is a new overall advertisement for the Go 'n Save travelcard scheme, 3774 (C774 OCN) going back into livery with Gateshead & District.

Golden Coaches, Llandow

The local service fleet finally comprised Bristol RESL/ECW GHB 147N, Leyland Leopard/Alexander AY GNL 843N, Bristol LHS/Duple Dominant HTH 518N, Leyland Leopard/Duple Dominant OIB 6701, Leopard/Plaxton Derwent LUG 518P, Leopard/Plaxton Supreme SFV 201P, Leopard/Duple Dominant I YFC 13R, Bristol VRT/SL3/ECW UGR 693R, Seddon Pennine VII/Alexander AY XSD 604T, LHS/ECW LFJ 849W, Leopard/ECW UWY 89X, Freight Rover Sherpa/Carlyle D136 WCC, E91 OUH, E117 RAX, Mercedes-Benz 609D/Reeve Burgess E700 HLB, Sherpa/Carlyle G225 EOA. Sherpa/Carlyle F949 CUA was on loan from John Harry, Cowbridge and was returned.

Great Yarmouth Transport

More youthful double-deckers sold are 50/1 (F50/1 HCL), Alexander-bodied Volvo Citybuses which have passed to Rhondda as its 851/2. AEC Swift/ECW saloons 79-83/5/6 have been noted at work on service 8 (Gorleston-Caister-on-Sea) this season.

Grimsby-Cleethorpes Transport ST

MCW Metrorider 47 (E47 HFE) is now working for East Midland.

Impact, Carlisle

An impressive new addition is Volvo B12T/Jonckheere Monaco CH72F XFV 257, in gold Redcrest livery for express services to continental Europe

Ingfield-Northern Rose BL

Volvo B10M E327 NEG is now re-registered JIL 7233. Iveco D558 HNW has been withdrawn.

Ipswich Buses

Loans of vehicles are of some note this month — smart Leyland Atlanteans from this fleet have seen frequent local service in **Southend** on rail replacement work during the summer, supplemented by occasional Dennis Dominators and new Volvo Olympian appearances. Unfortunately, new 42 (M42 EPV) suffered accident damage in collision with a Land Rover, causing chassis damage requiring its departure to the Luton area for repairs; Atlantean 29 (SDX 29R) also suffered severe damage at the notorious Cranham low bridge such that it is currently in store pending a decision as to its future. Similar unrefurbished 13 (RDX 13R) has been taken out of service after engine failure and is unlikely to be used again.

Frequent loans to Eastern Counties continue, Dennis Falcons 107/8/15/20 (C107/8 SDX, E115 KDX, G120 VDX) and Leyland B21s 144/6 (B114/6 NDX) having appeared at Ipswich depot for loans of up to a week and use on country services. B21s 149/52 (TDX 124W, XRT 932X) appeared at Great Yarmouth and Saxmundham depots at the end of June, Bedford YRT 170 (TBB 283S) being also used by Ipswich depot for driver training since its return from EC at Norwich in mid-June. B21s 144/8 (B114 NDX, WOI 607) have been with Suffolk County Council's Education Department to cover vehicle shortages there.

The front radiator aperture on Volvo Olympian 41 (M41 EPV) has been tidied by a grille, comprising three horizontal aluminium slats painted green to match the body, with 40 and 42 to follow suit if successful.

Dennis Falcon 122 (G122 VDX) has emerged in an experimental cream-roof livery, with green edging as per twin 104 treated last year. No decision has been made to standardise on such a scheme, however.

The arrival of CNG (compressed natural gas)-powered MetroRider 217 (L832 MWT) had still not occurred by late July, owing to problems with the ignition system in its Cummins engine. Its launch date was to have been 22 June.

Right: **Delta, Mansfield, has this Marshall-bodied Dennis Dart, M718 WUD.** KEVIN LANE

Far right: **Now with Independent, Horsforth, is this ex-Darlington Roe-bodied Daimler Fleetline saloon, NHN 260K.** ANDREW JAROSZ

Islwyn Borough Transport

Acquisitions from Kelvin Central are Mercedes-Benz 811D/Alexander C33F 4 (F852 LHS) and 8 (F94 KDS).

Kentish Bus & Coach/Londonlinks Buses BB

Further from R&I Buses are Dennis Dart 9SDL/Carlyle B36F 93/7 (G123/7 RGT).

The last Leyland Nationals in service are 474/7/84/6 (BPL 487/5T, EPD 528/5V), following the withdrawal of 478/85 (BPL 493T, EPD 534V).

Leaside Buses CW

Fourteen Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer are confirmed due for operation of service 307 from November.

Leicester Citybus FB

Dennis Dominator 247 (FUT 247V) has been withdrawn. Over the past year or so, dealer Norths of Sherburn-in-Elmet has taken 154/5/61/8 (LNR 154P etc), 174/6-8 (UFP 174S etc), 201/2/4 (YRY 201T etc), 238 (UFP 238S), 243/6/8/9 (FUT 243V etc), 291, 304/6 (GJF 291N etc) for scrap and 717 (F717 PFP); Whitings of Ferrybridge (dealer) has taken 159/66/9/72 (LNR 159P etc), 287/8/90/4/8, 300/3 (GJF 287N etc) also for scrap; AJS Salvage of Carlton (dealer) has similarly dealt with 170 (LNR 170P). Those sold to Norths initially were scrapped by Whitings.

Ex-Leicester City Leyland Atlantean/ECW PBC 104G is now a static playbus at the Mannings Amusement Park, Felixstowe in a red/yellow livery labelled 'The Big Red Fun Bus'. Scania BR111MH/B46D Metro-Scania saloon 5020 (ARY 225K) is still in stock as a display unit and is now renumbered 090. Driver trainer Leyland Leopards 5060/1 (BWG 831L, YSD 353L) are out of use, but are also renumbered as 912/3 respectively.

Little White Buses, Ormskirk

New are Iveco 59.12/Marshall B27F M239/40 XLV, but outgoing withdrawals are of Freight Rover Sherpa E968 SVP, now with Matthews Travel of Heswall and Dodges D862 MDB, D312 RVR now with Globe of Barnsley.

Liverbus, Huyton MT

New are Volvo B10B/Northern Counties 109/10/2/3 (M109 YKC etc).

Liverline, Bootle BB

Acquisitions are Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1R/ECW H45/32F 603/18/57 (A139 MRN, B962 WRN, A139 SMA) from North Western and similar 601/2/9-11/5/6/55 (DBV 135/6Y, B148-50/5 TRN, B960 WRN) plus Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1R/Park Royal H43/30F 727/8 (UPK 137/8S) and MCW Metrobus DR102/18/H43/30F 794 (GOG 141W) from Bee Line stock. 603/18 both wear overall advertisements for Merseytravel SOLO tickets, 794 retaining West Midlands Travel livery.

Now withdrawn are Leyland National 212 (PTF 755L); Leyland Atlanteans 421/61/6/9/71/8/80 (RTF 637M, NRN 384/92/6/8P, JPL 190/36K), 702/7/15/8/31/5/8/40/8 (PUF 136M, GDR 213N, LCD 42P, LTK 92R, VPA 154S, XPG 162/7/70/98T), AEC Routemaster 776 (776 DYE) and MCW Metrobus 794 (GOG 141W). 478, 715/94 are now with North Western, 733 passing to Martin, Middlewich (dealer).

London & Country BB

New are Dennis Dart 9.8SDL/East Lancs B40F 525/6 (M525/6 MPM), wearing a special livery of dark green with lime green skirt and roof with white trim stripes and a red diagonal stripe for the new variant of service 441 (Heathrow-Englefield Green) illustrated last month. Acquired from Southend Transport is Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R/Plaxton Paramount C57F TPL54 (A154 EPA), thus reverting to its original London Country fleetnumber!

Former Southend Routemaster RM1183 (183 CLT) is still *hors de combat*, resulting in Kentish Bus RMLs and, in late June, Nostalgiabus RMC1462 (462 CLT) deputising on Sunday service 410. The vintage bus operations of the London & Country fleet continue to generate great interest, not least by way of occasional unexpected appearances, such as AEC Regal IV RF315 (MLL 952) on service C5 on 27 June. Volvo Citybus 624 found itself in Southend in May when covering for a failed Southend Transport coach on service 795 from Brighton (subbing from Dunton Green).

Leyland Atlantean AN287 is a new overall advertisement for *Weekend Herald*. Leyland Olympian LR14, similarly for Radio Mercury, now has front end in livery. Leyland National SNB380 is first in the fleet to receive an internal video screen for showing advertisements to passengers; British Bus plans to introduce this group-wide.

London Central GA

Another new batch of double-deckers comprises Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties Palatine H47/30F NV1-10 (M401-10 RVU) for Docklands Express D1 (Waterloo & Docklands). A further 17 have been ordered for route 51 from November.

The London Omnibus Traction Society records further service-branded AEC Routemasters are RML883, 2270/5/9, 2335/96, 2411, 2515/51/4, 2601/29/76/83, 2711/2/4/33 for service 12 and RM527, 688, 868, 1002, 1621 and 1962 and RML2507/39/78 and 2673 for service 36.

The Leyland Atlantean AN68/1R/Alexander AL AN1 (VTP 258L) rest room for night bus drivers is now cared for by this fleet, parking at Victoria Bus Station. It now sports a microwave oven, refrigerator and tables.

London General

New are Dennis Dart 9.8SDL/Plaxton Pointer B35F DPL1-16 (M201-16 ECF). Also arrived is VWL1 (N101 HGO), the Volvo B6LE/Wright demonstrator which, LOTS reports, is apparently to be used on the 200 for nine months.

Always in the news, it seems, open-top MCW Metrobus OM171 was temporarily re-liveried as an allover advertisement for Nike, featuring tennis players André Agassi and Pete Sampras, during the Wimbledon championships June/July, vinyl panels being used to cover its London General livery. Roofed Metrobus M1440 (C440 BUV) is normally restricted now to driver training duties.

Red Arrow National Greenways now feature unusual Wayfarer ticket issue equipment, with the issue unit behind the driver's cab, retaining fareboxes.

London Northern MT

The Ailsas, V1, 2 (A101/2 SUL) have passed to fellow MTL company London Suburban, and now appear in Central London on the 4. AEC Routemaster RML2620 (NML 620E) has been repainted again, from its unrelieved allover maroon to the current uninspiring allover unrelieved red.

London Pride Sightseeing

The search for Dennis Dominators to replace the remaining Fleetlines continues to be successful, latest arrivals being DD152B/Northern Counties H43/31F MHR 50-4X from Thamesdown.

London United

United Counties Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties 714 (J620 GCR) was hired during July to survey the extended A2 route, pending delivery of the new Alexander Royale-bodied Volvo Olympians. Volvo B10/Wright B51F demonstrator M310 KHP has been at work on service 267.

Repainted and re-seated Dennis Darts now dedicated the new 'Airbus direct' work are DT1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10/2/7/9, 24/6/7. DT11/3/5, 168 are expected to follow suit.

M Travel, Newport (IoW)

As illustrated last month, Britain's first open-top minibus has been at work at Ventnor this summer — former Southern Vectis 1985 Ford Transit 190D/Carlyle O16F B261 WDL, converted by Southern Vectis, no stranger to such modifications!

MTL MT

New are Volvo B10B/Wright Endurance B49F 6558/9/61-75 (M558/9/61-3 WTJ, M564-75 YEM) and Neoplan N4009/B17F 7301-3 (M301-3 YBG). There will be no 6555 or 6560 owing to registration-match problems.

Volvo B6L/Wright Crusader B33F demonstrator M918 MRW has been examined but not used in traffic as has Neoplan N4076/B30D S-04510, the latter belonging to **Greek** company Papadakis Bros. SA and fitted for guided bus operation!

Acquisitions continue, with MCW Metrobus/H45/30F 0826-8 (E452/3/5 SON) from Great Yarmouth Transport; Leyland National 2/B36D 5290-3 (GUW 464/85/8/9W) from London Northern; Leyland National 2/B44F 5294-9 (BCW 823/4V, DBV 836/40W, LFR 863/72X), B52F 6201-3 (KHH 374/9/81W) and B49F 6204-7 (CEO 723W, ARN 891/3/4Y) from Ribble; Volvo B10M/Van Hool Alizée C49Ft VH1 (804 DYE, *F967 GMW*) from Silver Knight of Chippenham; DAF MB230/Van Hool Alizée C49Ft VH2 (NJI 9479) from Ellison, St Helens and twin VH3 (G260 EHD) from McPhails, Motherwell; B10M/Van Hool Alizée C49Ft VH4 (HIL 6975, *C29 VJF*) from Astra Travel of Harrogate; Freight Rover Sherpa/PMT Bursley B20F 7768 (D412 FEH) from PMT; Dennis Dart/Reeve Burgess B34F 7817 (K817 NKH) from London Northern. VH3 is to be re-registered 283 CLT, formerly carried by Routemaster RM1283.

A further batch of acquisitions by Liverbus on 13 May comprised Leyland Olympian/ECW CH45/28F 19 (B694 BPU); Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1R/Northern Counties H43/32F 21/4-6/8/31/2/4-41/3/4/6/8-50/3/5 (ONF 662/74/5/8/94R, SRJ 731/2/49/52-4/8R, ONF 658/70/1/93R, RJA 723R, UNA 763/76S, SRJ 742R, RJA 727R, UNA 788S, BNC 935T); Olympian/Alexander RL DPH45/27F 60, 61 (C375/6 CAS) and H45/27F 62 (C377 CAS); Leyland National/B49F 80-3 (XAK 459T, MNH 568V, PJI 5912/3); Volvo B10B/Northern Counties B55F 101-10/2/3 (K101-8 OHF, M109/10/2/3 YKC) and Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties H43/32F 211/8/9 (L211 SBG, M218/9 YKC). Purchased via dealer Coach 2000 on the same day were Leyland Tiger/Plaxton Paramount 3200 C46Ft 10 (A105 HNC), B10M/Jonckheere Deauville C51Ft 14 (J531 JHN) and Olympian/ECW CH45/26F 18 (B693 BPU) along with Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties H47/25D 201-10/2-7 (L201-10 SKD, L212-7 TWM), Leyland Titan TNLXB2RRSp/Park Royal or Leyland H44/24D 501-35 (WYV 61T, CUL 82, 141/51/82, 77, 102/11/61, 207, 178, 97V, KYN 290X, CUL 210, 129/70V, KYV 538X, CUL 205V, KYV 436, 393X, CUL 133V, KYV 423X, CUL 99, 126/81, 202/12V, GYE 251W, EYE 235V, CUL 221, 153V, KYV 405, 307, 401X, NUW 607Y) all from London Suburban Buses.

Now sold are 0128 (YNA 326M) and 1653 (HTJ 653P) to Goodwin, Barnsley (dealer); 0098 (A863 TCA), 0139/40/6/54/7/69/84 (YNA 370M, GND 490N, BNE 742N, OUC 39R, OJD 224R, PRJ 495R, CFM 84S), 0300 (ABN 300L), 1118 (THX 618S) 1314/25/56/68/74/82 (DKC 314/25/56/68/74/82L), 1456/66/9/76/99 (GKA 456/66/9L, GKA 476/99M), 1503/36/8/41/54/94 (GKA 503/36/8/41M, PKB 554M, GKA 19N), 1618/38/59/84 (GKA 43N, HTJ 638/59/84P), 1732/56/7/63/5/79/86 (LKF 732R, MTJ 756/7/63/5S, OEM 779/86S), 1834 (WWM 917W), 1901 (XEM 901W), 3312 (BYV 312X), 5208 (AKY 610T) and 6994/5 (WAS 770V, RJT 145R) to Whiting Bros, Pontefract (dealer); 6185 (AAS 185W), 6939/63 (UDW 639Y, AAX 563A), 7006/14 (XTJ 6W, CKC 628X) to Fleetlink of Mossley Hill; 7357/72 (D357/72 JUM) to Harrison, Clayton-le-Moors; 0682 (VWM 82L) to a new owner at Litherland for preservation; 5203/4 (AHH 203T, TRN 804V) to Lister PSV, Bolton (dealer).

A small fleet of FX4 taxis has been acquired for use as staff transport and numbered. They are 8019 (XHM 561T), 8200-9/16/7 (MUV 850X, OYL 801Y, A321 TYF, NYK 783Y, Q834 GKV, PYR 200Y, D637 SEM, Q907 GKV, CYE 28V, Q757 GKV, RUV 982Y, C147 CYL). Initial allocations were to Garston (8208/9/16), Gillmoss (8200-2/4/5/7) and Green Lane (remainder).

Maidstone & District BB

Fire-damaged Volvo Olympian 5913 (M913 BKM) is now proudly back in stock with brand new Northern Counties body.

Acquired Volvos 2846/7 (H846/7 AHS) are expected to enter traffic upseated with toilet/serveries removed. A further Leyland Lynx is expected from Kentish Bus stock shortly, as an additional vehicle for the Maidstone Park-&-Ride service. A minibus is also due from the same source.

Now withdrawn are Leyland Leopard 3456 (EKL 456K, last stalwart of this Marshall-bodied breed), Leyland Nationals 3552/5 (PKP 552R, SKR 555R), 3908 (SKN 908R) and the final Dennis Dominators, 5303/4 (FKM 303/4V). Ripley of Carlton (dealer) has now taken Dominators 5304/8/13/7/8 (FKM 304V, PRE 36W, XRF 23S, WWM 904W, UBG 24V).

All Invictaway vehicles are due to have received Green Line livery by September, 2846/7 being early recipients. Instead of the standard Green Line logo, Invictaway vehicles carry a red diamond on green stripes, surmounted by an Invicta horse.

M&D is to move back to Maidstone; the Head Office at Luton Road is to close by end-October, replaced by a rebuilt facility at Armstrong Road, Maidstone, as HO for Maidstone & District, Kentish Bus and Londonlinks. Luton garage is also to close, work moving to Gillingham, where private hire operations are to cease, Maidstone Invictaway workings moving over to that town. Gravesend-based services 306/8 are now the responsibility of Kentish Bus.

Metroline

MCW Metrobus M373 (GYE 373W) has returned off-loan to its native London United. Leyland Tigers TDL1, 2 (F789/91 GNA) and Volvo B10M-60 VP3 (H637 UWR) have been returned off-lease to Yeates, Loughborough (dealer).

Group codes

BB — British Bus
BL — Blazefield Holdings
CH — CHL (Cambus Holdings)
CW — Cowie Group
EY — EYMS Group
FB — First Bus
GA — Go-Ahead Group
ML — Mainline Group
MT — MTL Holdings
QD — Q-Drive
ST — Stagecoach Holdings
TR — Transit Holdings
WM — West Midlands Travel
YT — Yorkshire Traction

Midland Red South ST

New are Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander (Belfast) B23F 331/2/4 (M331 LHP etc), whilst acquisitions are Leyland National 11351A/B49F 571 (NOE 571R) from G&G, Leamington, Leyland National 2 NL116AL11/1R/B52F 802 (SHH 392X) ex-Cheltenham & Gloucester and Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R/Plaxton C51F 76 (6253 VC, *C472 CAP, JPU 817*) ex-Vanguard.

Now withdrawn are Iveco 59.10 887 (D887 CKV), Leyland Leopards 3 (Q275 UOC) and 2013 (LOA 838X), Leyland National 2s 800/2 (LFR 861X, SHH 392X) and Mk I 1412 (GOL 412N) along with Bristol VRT/SL3s 929/39/41 (NHU 672R, DWF 194V, GTX 746W). 800 is now with Cheltenham & Gloucester, 802 with G&G, 929/39/41 with Vanguard and 2013 with Circle Line.

Midland Red West FB

New are Dennis Lance/Plaxton Verde M237-9 MRW.

Northampton Transport FB

The last vehicles to go through repaint to complete the entire fleet programme are Bristol VRT/SL3s 71-4.

Former vehicles still in use in the Northampton area and not previously recorded are Bristol VRT/SL3/Alexander 45 (VRP 45S) with Payne of Buckingham, 46 (CNH 46T) with St John's Ambulance Band, Banbury (non-psv) and 51 (VRP 51S) and 66 (VVV 66S) are with Basford of Greens Norton. 66 has a unique combination of Alexander lower deck and **East Lancs** upper deck, following fire damage.

North Devon

New Mercedes-Benz 609D/Frank Guy B19F 901/2 (M901/2 LTT) are in yellow with duo-red stripes, black skirts and Red Bus fleetnames.

Plaxton-bodied Leyland Royal Tiger 2221 (HTT 204Y, *925 GTA, FWH 41Y*) has been withdrawn along with Carlyle-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D 709 (H915 WYB), the latter now in Southern National stock.

North Western BB

Acquisitions comprise Leyland National 10351A/1R/B41F 311/2 (NPK 250/63R) from Northumbria; 23-year old Leyland Atlantean PDR1A/1 Special/Park Royal H43/29D 478 (JPL 190K), Atlantean AN68/1R/Park Royal-Roe H43/30F 715 (LCD 42P) and MCW Metrobus DR102/18/H43/30F 794 (GOG 141W) from Liverline; Atlantean AN68A/1R/Park Royal H43/30F 729 (UPK 140S), DR102/22/H43/30F 773/98/9 (LOA 428/16/9X), DR102/12 779/81/3 (BOK 36, 51, 53V) and DR102/18 789/93 (BOK 90V, GOG 139W) from Bee Line and, from unknown source, Ford Transit/Carlyle B16F 858 (D333 WPE).

Now withdrawn are Leyland Nationals 209/33/4/41/3/4/50/1/6/60 (PTF 738L, UHG 750/1R, ACW 764R, CBV 766/7/91/2S, JOX 515P, NOE 558R), 326/7/58 (NPK 259R, GPD 297N, CFM 346S), Leyland Leopards 397 (HEF 362N) and 835-7 (LOA 835-7X), Bristol VRT/SL3 556 (RMA 436V), Leyland Olympians 603/18/57 (A139 MRN, B962 WRN, A139 SMA), Leyland Atlantean AN68 709 (SCD 728N), Bristol VRT/SL3s 819/23 (A39 SMA, A195 KKF).

Leyland Nationals 230/4/41/3/4/50/1/6, 326 are now with Bee Line, Olympians 603/18/57 with Liverline. Dodge S46 49 (D449 NNA) has also gone to Bee Line, but Leyland National 214 (SCK 687P) is now with PVS, Carlton (dealer). 221 (SCK 699P), 322 (LPB 207P) and Atlantean 411 (RTF 625M) continue in traffic and are not withdrawn.

Dennis Dominators 630//3/51 (F630 BKD etc) are now in City Express livery. A certain enthusiasm now encompasses Atlantean 478, the last of many such vehicles in the North Western 'group' and a 1972 Commercial Motor Show exhibit when new.

Ogden, St Helens

The second Dennis Dart in stock is Plaxton Pointer-bodied M20 GGY.

OK Travel, Bishop Auckland GA

Recently-acquired Leyland Atlanteans AUP 377W, MBR 448T and SCN 284S are now all at work from Bishop Auckland depot, the latter pair in OK livery.

Osbornes, Tollesbury

New is Volvo B10M-62/Caetano Algarve C49Ft M577 JBC.

As if to illustrate that one man's meat is another's poison (or vice versa? *Ed*), Bristol VRT/Alexander OSR 191R has now celebrated 15 years with this fleet, after only three with its original operator, Tayside, which took a strong dislike to the VR along with most other Scottish fleets.

News not previously reported is of the delivery of DAF SB3000/Caetano Algarve C53F L705/6 CNR in Grand UK Holidays colours. Volvo B10M/Plaxton G88 RGG is now equipped as the Colchester United FC team coach.

Disposals similarly not previously recorded are of Bedford YMT DPU 505T to Stan's Coaches, Great Totham (sold onward, unused, to Tony Glew of Colchester); Volvo B58-61 MFK 768V was written off after an accident; B58-56s JJU 442/3V have passed to Whincop of Peasenhall; Leyland Royal Tiger 5367 RU is now with Safedrive (believed of South Mimms). B10M/Plaxton C101 AFX was re-registered JIL 5628 and then sold to dealer Bob Vale; Leyland Fleetline OUC 38R has gone to Fourways Coaches, Chelmsford.

Leyland Tiger FNM 860Y is now JIL 5623, JVW 160Y now SJI 4635 and B444 WAR is SJI 2954. Volvo B10Ms G70, 85/8 RGG are now TJI 1670/85/8 respectively and Van Hool T815 integrals G430/1 VML are now TJI 3130/1. The appropriate numerals are attributable to care taken by correspondent Geoff Mills in the arrangement of their new identities.

Oxford GA

MCW Metroriders 750-4/60 (D750 SJO, E751-4 VJO, E760 XWL) are now transferred to Wycombe Bus Company stock as 1750 etc, but Leyland Tigers 1109/15-7 (EBW 109Y, A115-7 PBW) are back in Oxford stock. Mercedes-Benz 608Ds 1205/6/10/1/6/8/35 (C205/6/10 PCD, C211/6/8 PTY, D235 URG) also returned from Wycombe, but quickly passed on to Brighton & Hove.

Courtesy of reader A. Cockram, Wycombe Bus fleet as at 2 August comprised Mercedes-Benz 811D/Reeve Burgess 1201-4 (G621 XLO, G222 KWE, H189/91 RWF); Leyland Nationals 1321/8/44/6/51/3/4/6/60/77/84 (TBL 165/72M, KPA 357/9/77/84/90P, NPJ 481R, TPE 158/77S, VPF 296S); Leyland Lynx 1401-5 (F556-60 NJM); Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXB/ECW 1508/9/43-52/4/5 (MRJ 8, 9W, GGM 110W, HJB 451-9/61/2W) and DP 1563 (CJH 124V); MCW Metroriders 1750-6/60 (D750 SJO, E751-6 VJO, E760 XWL) and Leyland Olympian coaches 1822-4 (D822-4 UTF).

Now withdrawn are Bristol VRT/SL3s 400/5/74/7/8/81/94/9 (HUD 500W, KJO 505W, HUD 474/7/8/81S, HUD 494/9W), Leyland Leopard 612 (WPD 27Y) and Mercedes-Benz L608Ds 1209/25 (C209 PTY, D225 URG). VRTs 400/5/94/9 went to Brighton & Hove, 474/81 to OK, 476 (HUD 476S) to the Oxford Bus Museum, 477 to the Royal British Legion, 478 to the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust at Gaydon. 486 (OUD 486T) is under cannibalisation for spares, 611/3 (RFC 11/3T) and 612 also passing to Brighton & Hove. 1209/25 have gone to Sunderland. The last Bristol VRTs in service are 407/12.

MCW Metroriders 750-4 (D750 SJO, E751-4 VJO) are now renumbered 1750-4. Radios are now being fitted to all vehicles.

Duple-bodied Leyland Tiger 108 (EBW 108Y) is another withdrawn.

People's Provincial

After a delay, new Iveco 59.12/Marshall B27F 204-7 (M204-7 BPO) have been delivered, whilst the new Dennis Darts were at WS Coachbuilders for bodying in June for September delivery. Pending the Ivecos' arrival, newly-reallocated Wycombe Bus MCW Metrorider/B25F 1750/1/3/4 (D750 SJO, E751/3/4 VJO) have been on loan with People's Provincial fleetnames applied to their Oxford livery.

Leyland National 403 (AYR 299T) has been delicensed, whilst the remains of 24 (UAA 224M) have passed to J & S Motors, Funtley as scrap. 381/92 (NPD 135L, BCD 819L) have passed to Blue Triangle, Rainham, 64 (KDW 338P) operating for Huxley of Threapwood still in Provincial livery. 385 (NPD 134L) passed to Heywood & Prosser, Bedworth.

A slightly unusual fleet renumbering (of sorts) now sees all non-minibus vehicles up to 18 years of age given a T-prefix to their fleetnumbers, indicating availability for Hampshire County Council tendered services.

Plymouth Citybus

Dodge S56s 26/7 (D126/7 LTA) have been withdrawn along with Volvo B10M-61 345 (E686 DTT, *JSK 263, E367 UHS*).

Leyland Atlantean 153 (ATK 153W) has a new overall advertisement scheme for Flambards Triple Theme Park.

Premier Travel Services CH

Volvo/Plaxton Expressliners G375-82 REG were due for return to their lessee by 1 August.

Preston Bus

Optare MetroRiders 8 and 10 (M408/10 RCK) are now reported in fleet livery ex-allover cream.

Ribble ST

Acquired was nearly-new Volvo B6-50/Alexander Dash B40F 1311 (M846 HDF) from Cheltenham & Gloucester, only to be withdrawn a month later.

Now withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz L608Ds 506/16/50/63 (D506 RCK etc), Leyland Nationals 807/9 (TRN 807/9V), Leyland National 2s 824/36/63/72/91/3 (BCW 824V, DBV 836W, LFR 863/72X, ARN 891/3Y), B6-50s 1301-11 (M741-6, 847, 748-50 PRS, M846 HDF) and Leyland Atlanteans 1450/69/84/5 (LEO 735Y, TRN 469/84/5V).

305 (HHH 371V) is now with Williams of Crosskeys, 873 (LFR 873X) passing to G&G of Leamington Spa. 1301-11 went to East London and the Atlanteans to Road Car. Leyland National 2 395 (RRM 385X) is now with Swindon & District.

Volvos 435/7 (M235 TBV, M794 PRS) now carry lettering for service 192 (Manchester-Hazel Grove), 453/4 (M453/4 VCW) for M10 (Manchester-Brookhouse). Mercedes-Benz 525 is a new overall advertisement for Plas Tech Windows.

Rigby, Cleckheaton

The first full-size vehicle here is AEC Reliance/Duple EPM 131V ex-Wilcock, Morley.

Riggott, Kinsley

Leyland Leopard/Duple BHO 440V is now in stock ex-Prentice of West Calder.

Roffy, Flimwell

Now in stock is Neoplan N122/3/C53/18Dt XEL 587 (*MAN 111J, XEL 587, EFW 855X*) from Morgan, Towers & Smith of Fareham.

Right: **New to Midland Red North is this Scania/East Lancs, 1835 (M835 SDA).** ADRIAN PEARSON

Far right: **Rhondda has bought two Alexander-bodied Volvo Citybuses from Great Yarmouth, one of which is 852 (F51 ACL).** D. J. SMITH

Rossendale Transport

Acquisitions are MCW Metrorider MF150/72/B23F 52-55 (E481/3 CNM, E979/80/77 DGS) from Sovereign Bus & Coach; for use on Rossendale Valley tendered routes, Talbot Freeway/B16FI 199 (E764 KJX) from the Employment Service, Sheffield which carries fleetnumber 15 at present and will retain its rear doors; and Volvo B10M-60/Van Hool C49Ft 316 (G94 VFP) from Houghton of Woolton — this being acquired in part-exchange for 315/6 (see below).

Now withdrawn are Bristol LHS6L 51 (SND 551X) — first to go, Leyland Atlanteans 21, 154 (ABN 721V, CWG 754V), 88 (HIL 3188, *D888 YHG*) — first Olympian to go, Leyland Tigers 315 (A394 JEC, *NIW 6515, A128 MBA*), 316 (NIW 6516, *A133 MBA*) and Volvo B10M 370 (NIW 6515, *170 BHR, 924 AYA, STT 604X*). The Olympian withdrawal was a real surprise, being exactly eight years old — it had spent its last months on local service work after having been new to Ellen Smith duties. 21 was an accident victim.

21 is now (in service, repaired) with Cartmell of Burnley, 88 passing to David Hill Engineering of Wakefield (dealer), 315/6 to Moseley of Carcroft (dealer), 370 to Haydock of Langho, 154 to Ripley, Carlton (dealer) for scrap after a long period in use as a seat store here and 195 (JKW 295W) similarly.

Sanders Coaches, Holt

AEC Reliance/Plaxton Elite II C49F rebody LAH 817A (*521 FN*) is now fully restored to East Kent livery, whilst two Bedford VALs await their turn for restoration.

A fleet numbering policy is now in force, viz:

1-8 (WOA 521, SFC 2T, ROV 903, RJI 8604, FPP 5T, GFH 6V, RJI 8607, CVA 108V); 12-19 (ATL 312X, RJI 8613/4, SJI 1615-9); 20-29 (SJI 1620-9); 30-2/7-9 (SJI 1630-2, PVF 377, J138 OBV, 3990 ME); 40/1/4/7/8 (MNM 40V, D441 CEW, GJI 4481, OGR 647, PJI 7348); 50/1/3-7/9 (JDN 506L, JNK 551N, WXI 9253, 354 TRT, FTO 551V, PJI 5637, FTO 557V, 259 VYC); 60-2/4/6/7/9 (B6 FFE, MIW 3561, D624 FJT, GOE 264V, SGF 965, YVJ 677, F269 GUD); 70-5/7-9 (B670 EHL, C117 KMA, A22 UBD, H113 DJM, KAU 574/5V, EAC 877/8T, JJF 879V); 80-4/6-9 (KPT 800T, LNU 581W, VKC 832/3V, BIL 8430, XVG 686X, PJI 8327/8, G389 LDT); 90/3-7 (FIL 8693, DJI 1594, DHE 605V, D694 MAG, HGG 997T); 100-9 (RRT 100W, LAH 817A, C220 VCT, WSV 503, JDX 574V, HUX 15V, XFE 694S, YJE 9T, F787 DNG, MMJ 574W); 110-5 (WVF 635S, JTL 805V, DRW 913T, HUX 82V, JGU 938V, CYD 133S, RDV 903).

Selkent ST

Delivery has commenced of the new Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties H45/23D for service 53; LOTS records 301-20 (M301-20 DGP), 321-5 (N321-5 HGK). In line with other Stagecoach fleets and marking the break to this, no class designation is allocated or carried and garage codes also are not carried.

Leyland Titan T209 (CUL 209V) has been withdrawn and despatched to Western Scottish, Volvo B10M trainer 3007 (WGB 834W) to South Coast Buses and all the Alexander-bodied Dennis Lances, LA1-16 (J101-16 WSC) to East London. The two remaining MCW Metroriders MR27, 46 (E127/46 KYW) have also been sold.

RM9 has regained its original registration number, VLT 9, from Olympian L263, which is now D367 JJD, which LOTS points out is the reverse of RML2367's registration, JJD 367D!

Shaw Hadwin

Unusual acquisitions are **two** 1949 Bedford OB/Duple Vista C29F, FAP 9 and LTF 346, both currently non-runners. A more up-to-date acquisition is Volvo B10M-61/Plaxton C49Ft D443 CNR, new to Stagecoach, Perth and latterly with Caledonian Express and now re-registered 509 EBL.

Shearings

Deliveries are Volvo B10M/Van Hool 660-84 (M660-84 KVV), whilst from Parks of Hamilton come B10M/Jonckheere 101/5 (L740/4 YGE) and from Bebb of Llantwit Fardre B10M/Plaxton 107/8 (K57, 58 BAX).

The Shires BB

Further acquisitions are National Greenway/East Lancs B41F SN534 (TIB 4886, *HPF 322N*), SN535 (RJI 6862, *MCA 677T*), SN536 (TIB 4873, *MCA 671T*) from Crosville Cymru; National Greenway/B44F BTX 752T (*NIW 4810, AYR 329T*) from Parfitt, Rhymney Bridge; Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1R/ECW H45/32F MUH 284/7X from Rhondda Buses and Iveco 49.10/Carlyle F656 KNL from OK Travel (for spares). Midland Fox Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R/Plaxton C46Ft 20 (A927 KFP, *XPA 110, A104 HNC*) has been on loan for two months to cover for coaches away for repainting into latest Green Line livery.

Greenway RJI 6861 is now numbered SN529 and mini F267 CEY is now 1009 in ancillary series. 59 (D934 EBP) is similarly now 1059, but was noted in public service with this new number in late-May. 15-7 (E485/6/4 CNM) are now renumbered MCW35/3/4. Ex-Buffalo 171 (F985 GKJ) is confirmed as B25F. Leyland National 570 (MNH 570V) is now reinstated.

Now withdrawn are Ford Transits 22/4/7, 32/3 (C22/4 NVV, B27 HRP, C196/7 KBH); Iveco 49.10 MBI54, 60 (D497 RNM, D472 RVS), 37, 49, 55 (D754/66/72 MUR), 81, 95/8, (D496 RNM, D25 RPP, C508 DYM), 102/5 (C502/15 DYM), 171/2 (D473 RVS, D26 RPP), F271 CEY, F77 CJC; Leyland National 441/81 (UPB 341S, RNV 481M), 511/56 (KNV 511P, ERP 556T), LN461 (ORP 461M), SN430 (YPL 430T); Leyland Atlantean AN165 (XPG 165T); Leyland Fleetlines 968/72 (THX 336, 523S); Bristol VRT RNV 807M; Leyland Tiger NTL5 (SMY 633X).

Disposals are of Dodges 1-5 (D861-5 NYS) to South Lancashire, St Helens; Fiat 36 (D753 MUR) remains sold as scrap; Freight Rover Sherpa 88 (D403 SGS) to Ely, Woodston, 89, 94 (D404/9 SGS) to Southern National, 91/2 (D406/7 SGS) to Holder, Maidenhead, 93 (D408 SGS) to Manning, Challow, 96 (D411 SGS) to McQueen, Garelochhead; Leyland Tiger 132 (B291 KPF) to Wealden PSV, Five Oak Green (dealer); Bova 206 (UMS 394) to Harris, Summercourt. Dealer Houston Ramm of Rochdale has acquired Ford Transits 22/4/7, 32/3 and Ivecos 49, 55, 81, 95/8, 102/5/71/2.

Now outshopped in new blue/yellow fleet livery are Volvo B6s 331/2, Leyland Lynx 403, Leyland Olympians 634/54, Ivecos 1005/6, Dennis Darts DC8, 14, Leyland Olympians LRL30/1, MCW Metroriders MCW27, 30 and Leyland Nationals SN521/9. Leyland Tigers 112, STL203 and TPL98 are now in latest Green Line livery and B6 311, Leyland Nationals SN523/34-6 are all in new overall advertisement liveries. The first ex-Buffalo vehicle into fleet livery was Dart DC14.

Bristol RELL6G 1030 (NBD 311F) and former tree-lopper Lodekka FS6G KBD 715D are now at Aylesbury, where MUH 284/7X are to be allocated. Leyland National 495 and Ivecos 37, 55 and 172 are withdrawn at Dunstable, where the majority of former Buffalo stock is allocated. Hemel Hempstead expects to receive most of the Scania saloons on order to convert service 322, 344 and 501.

The two ex-Buffalo/Southend/Nottingham Olympians are still out of use at High Wycombe. Six new Mercedes-Benz 811Ds are due to go to Hitchin, whilst the first seven Scanias are to go to Luton for service 31, but meanwhile dedicated 'school bus' VRTs are now regularly appearing on services 27 and 31 in the interim. Ivecos 49, 95 and 171 and VRT 807 are being cannibalised at Luton also. Watford Borough Council's drive for a 'green' town centre is prompting the removal of Leyland Nationals and replacement by B6s.

Simmons, Bottesdale

New is Volvo B10M/Plaxton C53F M3 SOB.

Skills, Nottingham

New are Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Première 350 C49Ft 31/2 (M31/2 TRR) and similar C53F 33-8 (M133, 34-8 TRR), together with Mercedes-Benz 609D/Onyx C21F 64 (M64 RRA). Acquired are 208D/Devon 12-seater 79 (L79 WMV), Scania K93CRB/Plaxton C53F G882 VNA ex-Shearings and Volvo B58-56/Plaxton KIW 6423 from Torrs, Nottingham.

Southampton Citybus

Most pleasant to record is the re-purchase of 1949 Guy Arab III/Park Royal O30/26R 64 (FTR 511) from preservation, for open-top sightseeing tour work.

Southend Transport BB

Registration NXI 9005 from Volvo B10M 570 is now carried on a Proton car with a London owner. All the acquired Volvo B10Ms are now in traffic.

Leyland Tigers 549/57 (A249 SVW, B83 SWX) are now in Green Line livery, whilst 561/2/4 (A103/6/26 EPA) have been withdrawn and sold to Thamesdown (qv). Leyland Olympian coach 256 (A110 FDL) is now in standard livery.

Colchester Leyland National 2 19 (EON 829V) has been on extended loan, native Tiger/Duple Caribbean 546 (A246 SVW) residing in Colchester.

Further to Fleet News August, AEC Routemasters 111/7 (ALM 101B, 682 DYE) have now both been exported to Germany by Brakell Omnibus Sales (dealer).

Southern Vectis

New are Volvo Olympian YN2RC16Z5/Northern Counties DPH40/30F 744-6/8-51 (M744 HDL etc). First into service were 746/9/50 following use as type trainers.

An acquisition is Leyland Tiger/Marshall 865 (F86 TDL, *A550 DPA*), thought previously with the Ministry of Defence in Wales. This is to become a driver trainer, but has been initially useful for foreign student transfer work, also covering extras on rail strike days.

Earlier Leyland Olympians 686-93/5/6/8 are now all upgraded to DP status as DPH40/30F, starting with 698 in March 1994 and latest being 690 in March this year.

The new livery has been decided, following variations on a theme. This now comprises dark green skirt and upper saloon window surrounds/roof, with 'mushroom' in between, trimmed with a thin red strip above skirt level. 288, 690/6, 712/44-6/8-51 and 865 are already in the new scheme.

Open-toppers 500-2 and 507 (MDL 953) have all been at work on service 42 (Yarmouth-Alum Bay). 507 re-entered service after re-acquisition on 9 June, 17 years after its withdrawal and sale to Norths in July 1978. On that day, 500-2 were away at the Derby at Epsom. Bristol MW6G 806 has remained delicensed this year.

Bristol VRT/SL3 open-top convertibles 505/6 (UFX 857/8S) have been the only two open-topped, in use on services 8 and 44. Flat-front VRT/SL 628 (SDL 638J) is now on loan to Westbrook Travel of Ryde for two years, a condition of use being its retention in full Tilling-style Southern Vectis livery.

VRTs 670-5 (UDL 670S, YDL 671-5T) have been officially withdrawn, but remained licensed for a while afterwards — indeed 673 has been in use with the coaching unit. 673 is now with Brewers of Bristol, 671/4 reported at work in the Basingstoke area.

South London CW

MCW Metroriders MR93-6/8 (E873/4 NJD, F895/6/8 OYR) are now back from loan to East London. MR94-8, along with MR29 and T349 have all since been sold to Ensign.

South Manchester, Hyde

Leyland Atlantean/Willowbrook WWM 928/32W are now in stock from Pennine Blue, Bristol VRT/SL3/Alexander RBD 41R from Harris Bus of Grays and Daimler Fleetline/Northern Counties YNA 282M from Stotts of Oldham. Former Fylde Leyland Atlanteans 64/7 (ONF 664/7R) are now in livery.

Group codes

BB — British Bus
BL — Blazefield Holdings
CH — CHL (Cambus Holdings)
CW — Cowie Group
EY — EYMS Group
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Southern Vectis has a batch of new Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Olympians and a new livery. PHILIP R. WALLIS

South Wales Transport FB

Acquisitions from Bristol CityLine are Mercedes-Benz L608D/Dormobile B20F D557-9/65/9 FAE and on loan from Kirkby, Anston (dealer), formerly Express Travel, Perth is Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton C46Ft H556 WTS, the latter to cover for Expressliners away for repaint into blue/silver 'Airlink' livery.

Mercedes-Benz L608D 240 (D240 LCY) and Bristol VRT/SL3 983 (BEP 983V) have been withdrawn, both after accident damage.

Mercedes-Benz 814D 374 is a new overall advertisement for Dragon Sports.

The repaired and locally very popular 1953 open-top Bristol KSW5G/ECW 500 (WNO 484) has been having a bumper season, packed to the gunwales on a daily basis on its route between Swansea and Oystermouth; long may it continue.

Speedlink Airport Services

New is DAF SB3000/Van Hool C51Ft. Now withdrawn are Volvo B10Ms 28-31 (C856-9 EML), 302/3 (C302/3 EML) and Leyland Tigers BTL30, 33, 35 (C130/3 PPE, C135 SPB). 28-31 are now with Heathrow Airport.

Stagecoach South Group ST

New are Volvo B10M-55 YV31M/Alexander PS DP48F 636-8 (M636-8 BCD) for South Coast Buses at Eastbourne, with Bright-Tech indicator displays. From Cumberland come Volvo B10M-61/Van Hool Alizée C49Ft 8503 (IIL 3503, *E936 XSB, TXI 2426, E625 UNE*) and 8505 (IIL 3505, *E942 XSB, XIA 257, E623 UNE*), both allocated to Chichester, operating in allover white and new to Shearings.

1102-4 (M102-4 CCD) have been on loan to Southampton Citybus, whilst Leyland Atlantean AN68/1R/Alexander O45/31F KSU 839P has been on loan from Guide Friday to South Coast Buses at Hastings to cover for ailing Bristol VRT/SL open-topper 0770 (HKE 690L), undergoing repairs after mechanical failure and also whilst its audio equipment was modified. Perhaps to make amends, the revitalised VRT appeared on morning school services on 27 June and 3 July most unusually.

Further re-registrations are of South Coast Buses 133 (420 DCD) to HUF 639X; SCB 619/20 (L619/20 TDY) to 419/20 DCD; Sussex Coastline 621 (L621 TDY) to 421 DCD) and SCB 2909 (419 DCD) to F471 CJK. Sussex Coastline Leyland Titan PD3/4 tree-lopper P421 (421 DCD) has now succumbed to the inevitable re-registration to PRX 458B, now noted at store in Worthing. It is now labelled 'Tree Pruning' in black.

322 (VTV 172S) is now with Sussex Coastline ex-Hampshire Bus, 1102-4 (M102-4 CCD) going from SCB to Stagecoach South (unallocated) prior to loan to Southampton.

An acquisition for ancillary stock is Volvo B10M-61/Duple Dominant IV C12F T834 (WGB 834W, *WLT 416, NCS 114W*) from Western Scottish, for continued use as a driver trainer and now allocated to Selkent. Sadly, it appears indirectly to have ousted ex-Southdown Leyland Titan PD3/4 trainer T294 (FCD 294D), delicensed by 22 June. Leyland National 167, in store at Basingstoke, is under cannibalisation to keep others of its type serviceable.

An historic visitor to the South Coast Buses depot at Lewes on I5 July was the last-numbered AEC Routemaster built, East London showbus RML2760 (SMK 760F), which made an overnight stay.

Swanbrook, Cheltenham

Ex-London Leyland Titan TNLXB2RRSp/Park Royal H44/26D WYV 47T is now at work in full livery after a period in Kinch colours.

Leyland National 2 MNW 133V is now refurbished to DiPTAC specification and outshopped as a new overall advertisement for Elizabethan Pine. Leyland Atlantean MVK 546R has now lost its allover scheme designed by a Cheltenham Borough school (having become due for repainting) and is now an overall for Swanbrook Sunshine Holidays, as are Leyland Fleetlines OJD 151R and SDA 566S. Iveco-engined Leyland Fleetline THX 340S is now converted to semi-automatic control; twin THX 500S, also Iveco-engined, is also owned, both also ex-Kinch.

Daimler Fleetline NOB 306M has been withdrawn and cannibalised, but newer Fleetlines SDA 644/59S have been sold, 644 now with Village Tours of Garston.

Swindon & District ST

Deliveries are Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander (Belfast) B25F 711-5 (M711-5 FMR), all at Swindon. Bristol VRT/SL3s 216/20 (XOD 606S, VOD 598S) have been relicensed and sent on loan to Cheltenham & Gloucester, whilst Cheltenham District's MCW Metrorider MF150/43 666 (E666 JAD) has been on loan.

Now withdrawn are Metroriders 601/76 (F53 RFS, E676 KDG), 601 passing to Cheltenham & Gloucester.

Seddon Pennine VII/Alexander driver trainer PSG 842P (*803 DYE, MSJ 470P*) is now numbered DT5.

Tees & District WM

New are Mercedes-Benz 0.405/Optare Prisma B49F 3001/2 (M301/2 SAJ), with electronic indicator displays, in use at Redcar on service 270 whilst acquisitions are of Bristol LH6L/ECW 1719 (YAE 515V) and 1939 (TCL 137R) from United stock.

LH 1930 (LMA 607P) has been withdrawn.

Overall advertisements are worn by Leyland Nationals 3106 for Mungle Jungle, 3142 Ian Jennings, 3147 Billingham Windows, 3154 Emmanuel Spence, 3731 South Cleveland Garages, 3732 Reg Vardy and Leyland Olympians 278 Croft Garages and 285 Two Wheel City Cycles. 3730 is now back in fleet livery, which is slightly now modified to include colour co-ordinated bumpers and skirts. LH 1961 is now in TMS 'diagonal'-style livery, the only LH to currently wear it.

Leyland Tiger/Alexander TE 1322 (A31 LWX) is reported reseated with bus seating (without luggage pen).

Thamesdown Transport

New are Dennis Dart 9.8SDL/Plaxton Pointer B40F 120-4 (XMW 120, N121-4 NHR), with a further four due for February 1996 delivery. Acquisitions are Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/2R/Plaxton Paramount 3200 C51F 318-20 (A103/6/26 EPA) ex-Southend Transport.

Dennis Dominators disposed of are 52-5 (MHR 52-4X, SMW 55Y) to Blue Triangle, Rainham, 56 (SMW 56Y) to Stephensons, Rochford and 57/8 (SMW 57/8Y) to Ensign, Rainham.

Acquired from Stephensons, Rochford are Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4R/Duple Dominant C49F XCC 682V and JMB 328T, the latter due to become a Class V training vehicle (as 391) and the former to be disposed of.

Dodge S56/Northern Counties B25F 402 (E402 WAM) is now outshopped in red/cream, renumbered 802 and transferred to Kingston Coaches stock to replace Ford Transit 12-seater 891 (B472 SCG).

Thamesway FB

A major investment in the Southend-London CitySaver group of services is to see no less than 19 brand new Volvo/Plaxton coaches delivered, the first four being proudly shown off at a press launch on 11 August in Basildon. All have lap belts throughout, as well as reclining seats and feature a slight revision of CitySaver livery, now orange and yellow with a **blue** band!

An interesting changing of hands has brought about the acquisition of District Bus, Wickford, from neighbouring British Bus fleet Southend Transport. The premises at Shot Farm, Wickford and the services (in the Basildon locality) are also included. Vehicles acquired were Freight Rover Sherpa/Carlyle B18F FRS21-4 (E962 SVP, E509 TOV, E105 SOG, F892 XOE) and Dormobile B20F FRS30 (D873 LWR); Iveco 49.10/Carlyle B23F IMB5, 26-9 (E905 EPD, F995/6 XOV, G158/45 GOL) along with Mercedes-Benz L608D/Alexander B18F 220 (D220 SKD). At the time of takeover, former Northumbria MCW Metrorider MF150/DP23F MR807/11/35/7/8 (E807 BTN etc) were also in use, reported on loan.

Acquired shortly afterwards were L608D/Dormobile B20F 7504-7/11 (D504-7/11 FAE) from Bristol CityLine, for use at District Bus.

Timeline, Leigh

Six further Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander are now on order.

United WM

West Midlands Travel Leyland Nationals 1471/85 (ROK 471M, TUE 485N), 1802/4/7/13 (OOX 802R etc) and Leyland National 2s 1019/24 (DOC 19, 24V) have been on loan and in store pending possible use in the event of a competitive attack, but are now returned.

Bristol LHs 1719 (YAE 515V) and 1939 (TCL 137R) have been transferred to Tees stock.

Current overall advertisements are carried by Leyland National 3130 for M&S Ford and Mercedes-Benz 2403 Agewood Toyota, 2450 Heron's Cycle Shop, 2474 Metcalfe's Florists. Bristol VRT/SL3 814 is now back in fleet livery.

Leyland Leopard/Plaxton Supreme 1011 (JUP 111T) is now converted as a towing vehicle.

Universitybus

The lone double-decker, Leyland Titan GNF 15V, has been busy again usually on Watford local services 603/604.

Vintage Yellow Buses, Bournemouth

Welcome first news of this 'new' operator comes from the Wessex Transport Society.

Open-top operations are now harmonised with Yellow Buses — the latter using Leyland Fleetlines 138/40 (VJT 138/40S). Thus at work are 30-year old Daimler Fleetlines CRU 180/7C and 29-year old former Portsmouth Leyland Atlantean PDR1/1s ERV 249/52D, all in Bournemouth yellow with two maroon bands. Ironically, whilst ex-Portsmouth open-toppers may be found on Bournemouth seafront, ex-Bournemouth open-toppers can, of course, be found on Portsmouth seafront with People's Provincial, with its 591/2 (NFX 130/1P)! Happily, dual-door Leyland Titan PD3 open-topper 156 (8156 EL) appears at times also.

Viscount Bus & Coach CH

New are Optare MetroRider/B27F S8-10 (M808-10 WWR). S8 is now named *Sir William Caxton* and S10 *Red Arrow*. Former West Riding Leyland Tiger/ECW B12 (A561 KWY) is now in Peterborough Bus Company colours, named *Robin Redbreast*.

Bristol VRT/SL3 B57 (BFX 570T) has a new overall advertisement for Classic Gold radio.

MCW Metrorider WM1 (E664 RVP) has been withdrawn and used as a source of spare parts.

Courtesy of *Cambus*, the journal of the Cambridge Omnibus Society (now kindly made available to Fleet News — send SAE to The Secretary, Teresa Stubbings, 45 Golding Road, Cambridge CB1 3RN for further details) — outstation allocations in early June were of Bristol VRT/SL3s B40, B74 (PWY 40W, SUB 790W) to Crowland, similar B78/9 (PWY 48/9W) to Deeping. March had VRTs B52/8, 60 (VEX 299X, VAH 278/80X) and Optare MetroRider S5 (J805 DWW) and Oundle enjoyed VRTs B1, B59 (VEX 291X, VAH 279X), Leyland Olympian/Optare B2 (E502 LFL) and MetroRider S8 (M808 WWR).

Wallace Arnold

Deliveries are of Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Excalibur 101/32-6 (M101/32-5 UWY, M136 UYG) and Plaxton Première 350-bodied 102-31 (M102-31 UWY).

Re-registrations are of J714/9/20-3 CWT to 8980, 7243, 7820 WA; WA 3399; 3333, 4030 WA respectively. 800 (8665 WA, *J801 BWY*) is now in use as the Leeds United FC team coach in C26Ft layout.

The useful Leyland Leopards rebodied in 1987 with narrow Plaxton Paramount 3200 bodies for work in Devon lanes continue at Torquay and are 436-8 (CSU 936-8, *SWW 126R, WUG 127/8S*).

All H-UWR vehicles are now sold, all but 20 of the numerous J-CWTs having also gone; their excellent condition ensures no shortage of potential buyers!

Warrington Borough Transport

The latest full batch of Dennis Dart/Marshall B35F comprises 239-43 (M239-43 YCM), followed by Dart/Plaxton Pointer 244-6 (M593 HKH, M284 HRH, M246 YWM). 245 is confirmed as B40F. 236/8/44/5 are lettered for Runcorn City Sprint new X1 service between Runcorn and Liverpool, whilst red-repainted 231 and 237/46 are lettered for the Chester City Sprint between Warrington and that City. 239-42 are lettered for The Runcorn Link (Warrington-Widnes-Runcorn).

Services are now operated to St Helens and Wigan in competition with North Western, improving the good value of the company's £2.50 day ticket.

Weardale Motor Services, Stanhope

New is Mercedes-Benz 709D/Plaxton Beaver B25F M6 WMS, whilst the first Bova in stock is H13 OVA, to C53F layout from Bennett of Chievely.

CVE Omni F565 JBB has been withdrawn and Van Hool Astromega TD824 C256 FHJ sold (being reported on loan to Black Prince last month).

Wessex FB

New are Volvo B10M/Plaxton Expressliner IIs 178/9 (M439/40 FHW). Eight Dennis Javelins are on order for October delivery.

All K, L and M-registered Volvo/Expressliner IIs are due to receive the blue, black and grey Airlink livery for the service 200 (Bristol-Heathrow-Gatwick). 138 (K65 OHT) now wears Eurolines livery for the Bristol-Paris service, 162 (K793 OTC) being allover white and used on Eurolines, Citylink (Bristol-Stranraer) or National Express work as required.

Iveco 144 (E994 LAE) has been withdrawn, replaced by ex-Midland Red West Talbot Pullman 145 (H201 JHP), dedicated to service 331 (Bristol-Bristol Airport), wearing National Express colours for this. Volvo B10M 147 (G563 VHY) has now finally been withdrawn (after use until at least mid-June) and is now with Western National.

Western National FB

The long-awaited new double-decker coaches are now in stock and are Volvo B12/Van Hool CH71Ct 2101-3 (M101-3 ECV) based at Camborne for National Express Rapide work. The lone Dennis Lance/Wright Pathfinder is 221 (M221 EAF), dedicated to service 183 (Plymouth-Okehampton), a Devon County Council tendered service; DCC also supported the vehicles' purchase.

Acquired from Lidgeys Coaches of Tregony and placed into the operational fleet are Fiat/DP23F 7015 (ELB 165T); Mercedes-Benz/DP19F 7016 (MRX 271X); DAF/Berkhof C49F 7041 (A831 NTW), DAF/Van Hool C53F 7042 (D617 YCX) and LAG Panoramic/C49F 7043 (F767 XNH). Also acquired, but placed in store for disposal are Bedfords 7031/2 (MFE 391V, MUY 59X); Dodges 7001-6 (B345 VTA, D128/50/73/4/84 LTA); Freight Rover Sherpas 7007-11 (D741 JUB, D953-5 NOJ, E86 OUH), Bristol LH 7021 (TPJ 58S), Ford 7022 (NLG 106L), Bedfords 7023-7 (HAF 819L, TEC 900N, YJH 711M, YGL 649T, JKV 423V) and AEC Reliance 7033 (URL 991S).

Other acquisitions are Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4R/Duple Dominant C49F 3418 (XBF 57S) from East Devon Buses and Mercedes-Benz L608D/Reeve Burgess B20F 163/4/6/8/9/74 (C213/4/6/8/9/24 HJN) from Eastern National.

Volvo B10M/Plaxton 2247/8 (F444/5 DUG) are now C48F ex-C51F, 2258/60 (H613/5 UWR) C46F ex-C49F as is 2402 (J703 CWT) and 2508 (D508 HHW) is now re-registered UWB 183. Bristol VRT/SL3s 1128/42, 1227 and Leyland Olympian 1810 have been refurbished. L608D 169 is now in Roberts new livery, Bristol VRT/SL3 1229 in Flambards livery. Leopard 3550 (JTH 44W) is now allocated to driver training duties.

Sales are of 571/2 to Cofton Coaches, 3304 to East Devon Buses, 3554 to Brewers and 7012 to Taw & Torridge Coaches. Other sales are of 519 and Dodges 7001/3/6. Bristol VRT/SL 1083 (HTC 728N) was noted still in Truro in July, having been withdrawn last year.

Westlink WM

New for the 371 are MAN 11.190/Optare Vectas VA1-6 (N281-6 DWY). They are B42F. Volvo Olympian/Alexander Royale demonstrator M832 HVC has been in use on service 131 in anticipation of 12 similar buses for the service.

Leyland National LS422 now has a video screen fitted behind the cab.

West Midlands Travel WM

The first large order for new vehicles for some years has been placed. It calls for 150 Wright Endurance-bodied Volvo B10Bs, with an option on another 150 to follow. Delivery is due to begin in November, though two Volvo demonstrators have been painted in WM livery in anticipation of the order — recalling days when Birmingham City Transport livery was popular for demonstrators. The new buses will have Euro 2 engines.

Acquisitions are Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4R/Duple C49Ft LD557/8 (FYX 817/8W) from County Bus; Iveco 49.10/Robin Hood B21F D31 KAX, D38, 41 DNH, D474 WPM, D612 BCK and B19F D37 DNH, D410 FRV from South Durham Transport; Leyland National 11351/1R/B50F 1503 (TOE 503N) and 11351A/1R/B50F 1815 (OOX 815R) from Smiths stock.

Withdrawals are Leyland Fleetline 6639 (SDA 639S) and Leyland Nationals 1606/9/12/33/4 (NTC 606/9/12M, PUK 633/4S).

Former Brighton Leyland Titan PD2/37/Weymann driver trainer 5010 CD has been re-registered PSK 389.

A programme of refurbishing Metrobuses began in June, at a cost of £25,000 per vehicle. The work encompasses both Mk 1 and Mk 2 vehicles and is being undertaken at the rate of around five a week from Marshalls. If the programme goes through to completion it will take some four years.

Yellow Buses, Bournemouth

New is Scania K113CRB/Van Hool C49Ft 12 (M12 YCL), whilst acquired coaches are K112TRS/Berkhof CH57/17Ct 1 (D308 LEL, *BUI 7646*, *D332 MHB*) ex-Buddens of Romsey and DAF MB230/Van Hool C15Ft 11 (G974 KJX) from McPhail, Newarthill. 11 is on loan for this season from Hughes-DAF (dealer), purchased 1 and 12 being in Yellow Coaches livery. New Dennis Darts 451-62 (M451-62 LLJ) have been reportedly proving popular and principally appear on services 10, 25, 41, 42, 68 and 69.

The last two Leyland Leopards, 91/2 (ERU 391/2V) are now delicensed, as are Leyland Fleetlines 523-9 (OEL 123-9M), 521/2 having seen service with Vintage Yellow Buses for a time whilst its vehicles were under preparation. Convertible open-top Fleetlines 132-5/7 (NFX 132P etc) and 139 (VJT 139S) are also now held in reserve as is 143 (AJT 143T), first of the T-registered batch to be rested. Reserve stock now comprises the four Bristol VRT/SL3s, four DMS-class Fleetlines, 15 native Fleetlines and Leopards 91/2. Convertible 136 (NFX 136P) remains in traffic in roofed condition.

Volvo Citybus/Alexander 213 (F213 WRU) has been away at East Lancs for repairs to its Alexander body after contesting the low railway bridge at Clingan Road, which peeled back its roof by four bays, fortunately without other injuries. 214 is a new overall advertisement, for Yellow Buses, Dennis Dominator 255 for Andrew Isaacs Solicitors, dubbed 'The Law Bus'.

Now in stock with Yellow Coaches is Scania K112/Berkhof Eclipse CH57/17F 1 (D308 LEL) ex-Buddens. Volvo DP 200 is now renumbered 2 in the YC fleet also. Leyland Tiger 4 (RIB 8744, *KGS 490Y*) is now with Southgate & Finchley Local Authority.

The Wessex Transport Society is thanked for kindly making available its bi-monthly *Review* for Fleet News, covering a wide range of Wessex area transport topics, including illustrations of such delights as former London prewar RT FXT 318 as a tar-spraying lorry with full-width cab and views from the recent Hants & Dorset Running Day. Send an SAE to Mike Caldicott, Chairman & Membership Secretary, Wessex Transport Society, 9 Lacehurst Court, 43 Cavendish Road, Bournemouth BH1 1RA for further details.

Yorkshire Traction YT

Re-registrations are Leyland Olympian/Plaxton 14 (MSV 922, *G115 VMM*) to 1737 HE; Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton 50 (MSV 927, *G125 MNG*) to YTC 49; Scania K93CRB/Plaxton 71 (J293 YHE) to 2542 HE, 75 (J964 YWJ) to OHE 50 and 3 (K803 FWE) to 3030 HE and Van Hool-bodied 4 (J19 ARK) is now 6290 HE; DAF SB3000/Van Hool 48 (F268 RJX) becomes PHE 692.

Leyland National 2 201/4/14 (EDT 201V etc) have been withdrawn and transferred to Road Car.

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Left:
West Midlands Travel has ordered up to 300 Wrights-bodied Volvo B10Bs; this demonstrator has been painted in West Midlands colours suitably.

Far left:
Thamesdown has some more Plaxton-bodied Dennis Darts in Dartline livery, including 122 (N122 JHR).
ANDREW JAROSZ

Left:
Another of those M-RCP-registered Northern Counties-bodied DAF DB250s (see last month) is 649, the first new double-decker for the Wigan Bus Company.
DAVID BARROW

Reports to be sent to **Sandy Macdonald, 12 Morton Gardens, Glasgow G41 4AF** to reach him by **13 October** for the **December 1995** issue.

A1 Service ST

As mentioned above, from the beginning of September this company was to take over the operation of most of the Clyde Coast local bus services, and four Mercedes-Benz minibuses were acquired from Clyde Coast as part of the deal. The vehicles concerned are North West Conversions C24F-bodied 609D G461 SGB and Dormobile B29F-bodied 709Ds K208/9 OHS, L916 UGA but their new fleetnumbers are not yet known.

A1 Service has also been used to replace the services operated by the Valley Bus Co. of Dalry whose operator's licence was cancelled by the Traffic Commissioner with effect from 21 July, and as a result now provides an hourly service between Irvine and Dalry plus a Dalry town service every 20min. Alexander B25F-bodied Dodge S56s 241-3/6/54 (D241 NCS etc) were transferred from Western Scottish for this additional work.

Further new Alexander H47/32F-bodied Volvo Olympians to join this fleet by mid-August comprised 914 (M492 ASW) and 915-23 (N849-57 VHH), all of which are allocated to Ardrossan depot.

More Leyland Titans from Selkent have been added to the fleet, with 933-5 (EYE 236V, CUL 189/79V) arriving by August. They are all TNLXB/2RRSp with Park Royal H44/26D bodywork, and were numbered T236, 189/79 by their previous owner. 933/4 entered service in London red, while 935 is reported to be being converted to single door layout.

Park Royal-bodied Leyland Atlantean 812 (WVM 888S) appears now to be part of this fleet rather than Western Scottish, and it is reported that similar 802/9-11 will follow. Conversely, Alexander-bodied Volvo saloons 506/7 (M869/71 ASW) are now in the Western Scottish fleet, and similar 510/1 (M481/3 ASW) were loaned to Clyde Coast from 7 August when this company relinquished its share of the Coastlink 535/Clyde Coaster service.

Carlyle-bodied Freight Rover Sherpa 001 (D262 OOJ) was sold back to Hamilton, Maybole in July together with similar 002 (D127 TFT). ECW-bodied Bristol VRT 832 (HWG 207W) was one of the last of its type to leave the fleet for Bluebird Buses and there are now none of this type left with A1.

AA Buses, Ayr

Marshall-bodied Mercedes-Benz minibus L637 DNA and Northern Counties-bodied DAF M630 RCP were painted into the white and red Clyde Coaster livery in August. Plaxton Paramount-bodied Volvo coach C519 DND has been re-registered TJI 5393. Caetano C18F-bodied Toyota HB31R E878 SSJ has been sold to Yeates (dealer), Loughborough.

Ashton, Greenock

More additions to this expanding fleet comprise M422 GUS and N991 KUS, Wadham Stringer B33F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811Ds; M423 GUS, TBP B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D; and E319 LHG, a Talbot Pullman B20F.

The local service of Lawrie, Beith between Largs and Beith was taken over during August together with Dormobile C20F-bodied Ford Transit F91 KDS, but the latter was quickly traded in to Blythswood (dealer), Glasgow. Another disposal to the same dealer is that of Plaxton C47F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4R UOD 673R (*4331 PO, SFJ 145R*).

Avondale, Greenock

Reeve Burgess-bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D E477 RAV has been sold to Westside, Greenock.

Bluebird Buses ST

ECW H43/31F-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXBs transferred to this company from A1 Service during June and July comprise 104/11/3/5-7 (JAK 209W, KWA 213W, HWG 207W, FAO 429V, EWE 205V, KKY 222W) while a similar 6LXC is 114 (KWA 219W). None had been allocated for service by July. Other recent additions are 431 (PES 190Y, *GSU 341, VTY 130Y*), Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R with Duple C55F body ex-Cleveland Transit 190; 433 (A940 XGG, *GSU 344, A507 PST*), similar but C51F and ex-Cleveland Transit 191; 435 (A942 XGG, *GSU 343, A506 PST*), similar to 433 but ex-Busways 2106; and 657 (DGS 625), Leyland Tiger PS1/2 with McLennan C37F body ex-Stagecoach Scotland 657 but recently stored at Fife Scottish Dunfermline depot.

Van Hool-bodied Volvo coaches 547-9 are now in full Stagecoach style livery ex- Jolly Roger overall white, whereas Duple-bodied Leyland Tigers 432/6 are now allover white, with 432 loaned to Western Scottish from May. Leyland Tiger 657 remains in McLennan colours. Alexander-bodied Leyland Tiger 450 (BSK 744, *D436 XRS*) was re-registered D744 BRS in June.

Clyde Coast, Ardrossan

Many vehicles are leaving this fleet in conjunction with the company's withdrawal from most of its local bus service commitments at the beginning of September. Robin Hood B19F-bodied Iveco 49.10s D29,32/4 BVV, D936 EBP were sold to Blythswood (dealer), Glasgow in August with Carlyle B25F-bodied example G225 GSG due to follow in September, while Dormobile-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds K208/9 OHS, L916 UGA and North West Conversions-bodied 609D G461 SGB were being sold to A1 Service as part of the deal.

Alexander PS DP48F-bodied Volvo B10M-55s 510/1 (M481/3 ASW) were obtained on loan from A1 Service from 7 August for use on the Clyde Coaster service when that company withdrew from that operation, and Duple C53F-bodied Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R PSO 177W has been loaned to this company from Western Scottish as the spare vehicle for the Clyde Coaster service. It is numbered 174 by Western Scottish although it is owned by Bluebird Buses, where it is numbered 432. Caetano-bodied Toyota J699 DJS has been re-registered TJI 6264.

Top right: **A1 is currently receiving 21 Alexander-bodied Volvo Olympians, one of which is 917 (N851 VHH).** MURDOCH CURRIE

Above right: **Former East Lancs-bodied Scania N113 MaxCi low-floor demonstrator L25 LSX is now Clydeside 525.** MURDOCH CURRIE

Above right: **New to Midland Bluebird is Wright-bodied Scania N113 574 (N574 VMS).** RICHARD WALTER

BRODICK
LAMLASH
WHITING BAY
THE ARRAN OPEN TOP EXPERIENCE
FOR THE BEST VIEWS OF THE ISLAND SCENERY & SEA
NO NEED TO BOOK - JUST JUMP ON!
THE ARRAN OPEN TOP EXPERIENCE

Right: **Under Stagecoach ownership Western Scottish has this year introduced an open-top bus service on Arran, initially using this 1970 Alexander-bodied Daimler Fleetline, R102 (HDS 566H).** SANDY MACDONALD

SCOTTISH COLUMN

SANDY MACDONALD

Bus operations on the Ayrshire coast have traditionally provided a great deal of interest, and events in recent weeks have continued that tradition.

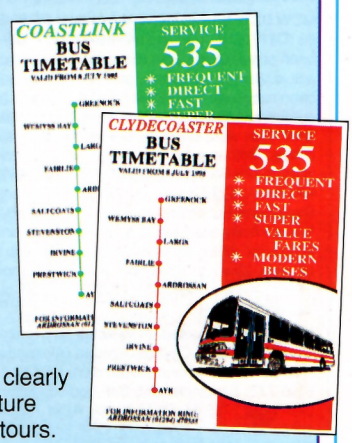
As reported in the last two issues, a consortium of A1 Service, AA Buses, Clyde Coast, and Clydeside commenced operation of a service between Ayr and Greenock on 8 July under the name of Coastlink 535, in competition with the similar service which has been provided by Ashton Coaches during the last year or so. Although the vehicles contributed by Clyde Coast to the new venture were loaned from A1 Service, all vehicles used on the service were initially in a livery of white with green Coastlink 535 fleetnames, and in addition most had one or two green bands applied. This compared with the Ashton Coaches livery of white with one broad green and two narrow gold bands, and its fleetname of Coastline 585.

Very quickly, Ashton Coaches claimed that the consortium was using 'copycat' tactics in order to poach passengers from its service and sought legal redress. This claim was upheld by the Court of Session and as a result the operators of through journeys on Coastlink 535 were forced to change the colour of their buses and the name of their service, albeit not the number, within a week or so of the start of the service. Thereafter all of the buses concerned, other than those of Clydeside which only operates journeys between Greenock and Largs, were repainted allover white with no fleetnames but still displaying service number 535. This position lasted until early August, by which time a new livery was adopted consisting of white with two red bands and a Clyde Coaster fleetname also in red. All Coastlink 535 publicity, in white and green, was withdrawn and replaced by Clyde Coaster 535 publicity in white and red — but Ashton Coaches publicity for the Coastline 585 service has also been changed to white and red!

On 4 August the involvement of A1 Service in the Coastlink/Clyde Coaster service ceased, and it has been reported that the company was only involved initially to get the service kick-started. The decision to withdraw was made before the court action had commenced. As a result of this, vehicles available for the Clyde Coaster service at the end of August comprised two from AA Buses, two from Clydeside, and five from Clyde Coast with all of the latter being on loan from the Stagecoach group. It is not unknown, however, for the Clyde Coaster-liveried vehicles to appear on other services.

During August, it became clear that Clyde Coast Coaches intended to withdraw from the provision of most of its local bus services with effect from 2 September, and that arrangements had been made with the Stagecoach Holdings group for their continuation. The services concerned were Largs local, West Kilbride-Glasgow, Ardrossan-Glasgow (two routes), Saltcoats-Beith, and Stevenston-Largs, and all were officially replaced by A1 Service on 3/4 September. This has left Clyde Coast with the Kilbirnie-Stewarton service which is operated under a contract with Strathclyde PTE due to expire in July 1996, and the Clyde Coaster operations.

It will be noted that one of the routes given up was that between Stevenston and Largs, which until recently operated between Saltcoats and Largs. This was the traditional service associated for so long with Clyde Coast Service, as the company was originally known, and it will be recalled that the company was set up as a co-operative in 1928 by a breakaway group of A1 Service members who wished to concentrate on that one route. The first reaction of the other A1 Service members was to compete with Clyde Coast on the Largs route but difficulty was experienced with the magistrates in Largs who at that time had powers to licence buses running into the town, so competition between A1 and Clyde Coast did not materialise then. As a result Clyde Coast flourished on this service, briefly extended to Irvine, and also developed an extensive hires and tours business. This situation continued for many years with the silver and blue, later grey and blue, Clyde Coast buses plying the route between Saltcoats and Largs. It was not until after deregulation of local bus services in 1986 that the company developed significant other bus service business, in various parts of Ayrshire. When Western Scottish Buses was acquired by Stagecoach Holdings last year a substantial part of that new business in the Kilmarnock area was given up, and with the latest developments Clyde Coast clearly intends to concentrate in future mainly on its contracts and tours.



The Coastlink and replacing Clyde Coaster publicity.

Clydeside BB

L25 LSX, a 1993 Scania N113CRL demonstrator with East Lancs dual-door bodywork, was acquired from Scania (dealer), Worksop in July. Now numbered 525, it has been rebuilt to single door layout, repainted into the current livery style, and put to work from Inchinnan depot.

While Northern Counties-bodied Scania L113CRL 501 (L588 JSG) had been used as a demonstrator, it had previously been numbered SD1 in the Bus Atha Cliath (Dublin Bus) fleet and was originally registered 94 D 28205. Further to last month's issue, Alexander-bodied Dodge minibuses 394/8 were previously in the Selby & District fleet while 397 had been in the main West Riding fleet.

Alexander-bodied Volvo B6s 446/7 were still in allover white with green Coastlink 535 fleetnames in late-August. Alexander-bodied Renault S56s 341/8 and Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopard 656 is another repaint into the current livery style, while Talbot Freeway DP12FL 206 (H906 YUS) has been sold to Collison, Stonehouse.

Davidson, Whitburn

Dormobile B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D K391 NGG was sold to Blythswood (dealer), Glasgow earlier this year. Similar Carlyle-bodied H415 BVR is now Timeline 95.

Essbee, Coatbridge

M717 GGD is a Mercedes-Benz 814D with Crystals C33F coachwork which was new in May.

Fife Scottish ST

New vehicles for this fleet in July comprised 311-5 (M311-5 YSC), Volvo B10M-55s with Alexander PS DP48F bodywork which have been allocated to Cowdenbeath (311-3) mainly for use on service X58 and Aberhill (314/5) for service X57. Another recent arrival is 1136 (LEO 736Y), a Northern Counties H43/32F-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68D/1R originally Barrow in Furness 106 and latterly Ribble 1451. It has been allocated to Aberhill.

Due to warranty repairs necessary on the fleet of Volvo B6s, it has been arranged that Plaxton Pointer-bodied Volvo B6 demonstrator M261 KWK would be on extended loan to the company from July and this bus has been reported in service from Dunfermline depot. Several other vehicles were on loan during the Open Golf Championship at St Andrews but full details are not available.

Several vehicles have been given rear end advertising for a Fife Regional Council campaign against parking at bus stops entitled 'it's just not on'. Those concerned include MCW Metroriders 50, 65; Leyland Leopards 123/39/41/9, 267/72; Volvo B10Ms 301/2; Volvo B6s 625/69; Leyland Olympian 703; Ailsa 868; and Volvo Citybus 916. With reference to the July issue, the Kwik Save overall advertisement on Volvo B6 626 has not materialised and it should be noted that the T. D. Young rear-end adverts on Leyland Leopards 184/8 were vinyls and not full rear advertisements. Further to the August issue, Citybus 919 is the Hare Krishna overall advert.

Plaxton Première 320 C53F-bodied Volvo B10M-60s 571-3 (K571-3 DFS) went to Grimsby Cleethorpes in June and similar 574/5 (K574/5 DFS) passed to Western Scottish in July.

Galson, Barvas

This operator has won short-term contracts, in advance of the possible service improvements mentioned last month, for the provision of journeys from Stornoway to North Tolsta, Ness and West Side at 01.30hrs on Saturday mornings between 12 August and 28 October.

GCT SB

Further additions to this fleet in July comprised GLA50-2 (TGE 820/9/31R), GLA53-8 (TGG 739/41/6-8/50R), Alexander H45/31F-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1Rs and GM72-4 (E195-7 BNS), MCW Metrorider MF154/12s with MCW B33F bodywork. They were previously Strathclyde Buses LA1101/10/2/24/6/31-3/5 and M98-100.

More Alexander-bodied Atlanteans were loaned to this company by Strathclyde Buses in July comprising LA1043 (MDS 706P), LA1136/40/2-4/7/8/50 (TGG 751/5/7-9/62/3/5R), and LA1151/2 (UGG 370/1R).

MCW Metroriders GM39, 56/7 have now been repainted into GCT colours. While application is being made to increase GCT's operating licence several vehicles, including Leyland Olympian coach GLOC7, have temporarily been transferred to the Strathclyde Buses fleet but carry notices stating that they are on hire to Comlaw 313 (GCT).

Evidence is to hand which suggests that Scanias SS3-5 (TIB 3511-3) were first registered in September 1993, not December 1993, and there remains lingering doubt about whether they were ever actually registered L320-2 VHS, although these numbers were proposed. They were not used until at least December 1993.

Grampian Transport FB

Loadings far higher than a minibus could cope with on service 26 have led to unconfirmed reports suggesting that the order for seven Alexander Sprint-bodied Mercedes-Benz 711Ds due in August has been cancelled and replaced by one for Dennis Darts due in February. To support this, two examples of this type inspected around 20/21 August comprised Alexander Dash B40F-bodied 9.8SDL M260 VWW from Yorkshire Rider (fleetnumber 3260) and an unregistered Plaxton Pointer B40F-bodied 9.8SDL of Thamesdown Transport. Neither was used in service.

Leyland Olympian 120 was given a rear end advertisement for BMW dealer John Clark in July, while all rigid Mercedes-Benz O.405s in Advance livery now carry lettering for and are allocated to Gold Service work.

Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopard 62 was transferred to Leicester CityBus in May, becoming number 27 in that fleet.

Green Line, Paisley

With effect from 6 July the local service between Neilston and Barrhead was extended to Pollok Centre.

Guide Friday

East Lancs H47/33D-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1R BTV 650T, previously Nottingham 650, has joined the Edinburgh fleet of this operator in Airbus Express livery, allowing the frequency of that service to be doubled to every 15min from 17 July, in order to match recent moves by Lothian.

Harte, Greenock

Former Carlyle-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D H112 DDS (*IIB 6819, H728 LOL*) is now numbered 442 in the Midland Red (North) fleet which it joined in February.

Kelvin Central SB

MCW B23F-bodied MCW Metrorider MF150/39s 1059-63 (D471-5 UGA) joined this fleet in February, having been acquired by SB Holdings last year. Although the actual order is not known, previously these buses had been registered 87 D 22541/2, 28221-3 and had been numbered MB1-5 in the Bus Atha Cliath (Dublin Bus) fleet. They were originally allocated to Kirkintilloch (1059), Motherwell (1060-2) and Old Kilpatrick (1063). 1049 (E185 BNS) is an MCW Metrorider MF154/12 with MCW B33F bodywork transferred in April from the Strathclyde Buses fleet in which it was numbered M88. It was initially allocated to Airdrie depot. A further acquisition which came with the local service business of Irvine, Law was KKW 68P, a Leyland Leopard PSU3C/4R with Alexander C49F bodywork but which has not been used.

New owners reported for vehicles sold recently comprise Capital Citybus, London (Alexander H43/31F-bodied Dennis Dominator DD110 1701, EGB 77T; Alexander H45/33F-bodied Dominator DDA145s 1745/54, DEM 83/4X, *ACM 768/9X*; and similar DDA157s 1746-51/3, CHF 346-51/3X); Islwyn Transport (Alexander DP31F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D 1067, F349 TSX; similar C33F-bodied 2070/2, F94 KDS and F852 LHS; and Reeve Burgess C33F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 814D 2074, H907 XGA); and WHM, Little Waltham (Alexander H44/31F-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE30AGRs 1691/2/8/9, LMS 166/52/1/5W; and ECW H43/32F-bodied FE30AGRs 1693/5/6, ULS 675/1/4T).

King, Kirkcowan

Plaxton C57F-bodied Volvo B58-61 ASG 585W was acquired in June ex-Cranston, Penicuik.

Lindsay, Lochboisdale

C707 FKE, a Ford Transit with Dormobile B16F bodywork previously Midland Red (South) 377, was purchased in April.

Ashton Coach Hire TBP-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D M793 EUS carries branding for the Coastline 585 service. MURDOCH CURRIE

Lothian

74 (N74 BFS) is a Caetano Algarve II C53F-bodied Dennis Javelin 12SDA which was new in August. New Alexander-bodied Volvo Olympians 201-20/2-34 are H51/30D and have YN2RC16Z4 chassis, with 233/4 having kneeling suspension.

Leyland Atlantean 658 has lost its *Daily Record* overall advertising livery in favour of fleet colours; having acquired its special livery in March 1985 this has been the longest serving advertiser in this fleet. Apart from having its front repainted into fleet colours in 1991 the basic advertising design remained virtually unaltered throughout the contract, and this vehicle long outlived its *Daily Record* counterparts in the Grampian and Tayside fleets. Leyland Olympians 318/25/42 and 677 are also now in full fleet livery, having lost their overall advertising treatments for Walkers Crisps, Edinburgh House, Famous Grouse and Walkers Crisps respectively.

In response to one or two queries about the disposal of vehicles from this fleet, it is only now possible to confirm the sale of Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlanteans 458-60/2/3 (JSG 458N etc) and 470-6/8-82/4/6-9/91-5/9 (MSF 470P etc) to Goodwin (dealer), Carlton in October 1994, followed by 521/5 (SSG 521/5R) in February this year. Similar 446 (GFS 446N) and 485 (MSF 485P) were sold to Edinburgh District Council in December 1993 and November 1994 respectively while 483 (MSF 483P) passed to Whitbread, Blackburn for non-PSV use in June 1994. In March this year 504 (SSG 504R) was sold to Play on Wheels, Edinburgh (non-PSV) and 900 (JSC 900E) was sold to the Lothian Bus Club, Edinburgh for preservation, while in July 496-8, 500 (MSF 496P etc) and 501-3/5-20/22-4/6-47 (SSG 501R etc) were delicensed in store at Seafield depot.

For the benefit of the many tourists now arriving in the capital, buses operating on city circular services 1 and 6 carry wooden boards on the front with the legend 'The Royal Mile Route'.

Lothian Transit FB

Recent additions comprise ECW H43/32F-bodied Daimler Fleetline CRG6LXBs 1111/3 (KSX 711/3N) ex-SMT DD711, Lowland 813; Plaxton C49F-bodied Seddon Pennine 7 1122 (PSU 322, *LSC 950T*) ex-Lowland 422; ECW H43/32F-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE30AGR 1167 (OSG 67V) ex-SMT DD67; and Leyland National 11351A/1R-B51F and B52F 1161/9 (BSF 771S, GSX 869T) ex-Lowland 161/9. Another recent addition, Leyland National 158 ASV, has been numbered 1158.

Loaned Alexander-bodied Dodge S56s D401-4/6/7 ASF, D751 DSH, Plaxton-bodied Seddon CSG 792S and Alexander-bodied Seddon JFS 985X were all withdrawn by May and returned or transferred to SMT (D401/4/6/7 ASF) or Lowland. Other recent withdrawals comprise Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards 1100 (HCS 800N), 1129 (OSJ 629R) and 1193 (AGM 693L); ECW-bodied Daimler Fleetline 1103 (KSX 703N); Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean 1118 (GRS 118E); and Rootes-bodied Freight Rover Sherpa 1159 (D459 CKV).

Lowland FB

702/3 (D402/3 ASF) are Alexander B21F-bodied Dodge S56s acquired from Lothian Transit earlier this year and allocated to Dunbar. Leyland Fleetline 852 has also been allocated to that depot.

Two variations of the new double-deck livery have been reported. Dennis Dominator 655 has been painted into standard Grampian style livery but with yellow rather than cream areas, while Leyland Olympian 916 is in a rather unattractive style of Grampian cream with two-tone green bands but with the addition of a yellow area around the rear lower deck window, and a yellow stripe added to the green between deck and lower panel bands. Whether future repaints are cream and green, or yellow and green, remains to be seen.

Leyland Nationals 161/9, Seddon Pennine 422 and Daimler Fleetline 813 were sold to Lothian Transit around June, while Leyland National 172 has gone to Dunsmore (dealer), Larkhall.

McColl, Balloch

M570 VSF, a Mercedes-Benz 709D with Alexander B29F bodywork, has been acquired from Campbell, Balloch for use on the subsidised service between Alexandria and Luss recently taken over from Campbell on retendering.

McDade, Uddingston

This firm has won contracts from Strathclyde PTE for no less than 14 Dial a Bus vehicles and as a consequence there has been an influx of appropriate stock. Those reported so far comprise N837/9-41/3 LGA and N78, 81 LGD, all of which are Mercedes-Benz 709Ds with Wadham Stringer B16FL bodywork.

McGill, Barrhead

The new service between Paisley and Kilbarchan commenced on 14 August, and is being operated as an extension of the services between Barrhead and Paisley. Buses on the Barrhead services are therefore appearing on the Kilbarchan route, including AEC Routemaster VYJ 893, but additional vehicles acquired for this development comprise Dormobile B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds K91/2 RGA ex-Rowe, Muirkirk. Leyland National GGE 171T has been re-seated B44F ex-B41F.

McLean, Portobello

The Portobello circular service was cancelled with effect from 4 July and the Dumbiedykes service followed at the end of that month.

MacLennan, Laxay

Short-term contracts have also been awarded to this firm for the provision of early morning journeys on Saturdays from Stornoway to outlying parts of Lewis. 01.45hrs departures to Portnaguran and Balallan have been provided since 12 August and are to continue until 28 October.

Mackie, Alloa

F662 WMS, a Duple C53F-bodied Dennis Javelin 12SDA, was sold to Moseley (dealer), Carcroft in May.

Mairs, Aberdeen FB

Northern Counties B22F-bodied Dodge S56 D674 SEM has been sold without being used since being acquired from Leicester CityBus last year, while similar B19F-bodied D320 DEF is being used for spares.

Marbill, Beith

This company has also been successful in obtaining new Dial a Bus contracts from Strathclyde PTE and N797-9, 801 FSD are Mercedes-Benz 709Ds with Wadham Stringer B16FL bodywork for this work. One of the previous generation of Dial a Bus vehicles, Talbot Pullman F518 HUS, is now owned by Blake, Winsford.

Martin, Greenock

New operator Gwentforth Ltd, trading as Martin's Transport of Greenock, was due to introduce a local service in the Paisley area on 28 August between Renfrew Ferry and Glenburn, Nethercraigs Road. It was to run on a 10min frequency on Mondays to Saturdays between 06.30 and 19.00hrs, competing with various other firms but notably Clydeside.

Martin, Uphall

This operator acquired Alexander H44/31D-bodied Ailsa B55-10 SSN 244S from Grangeburn, Motherwell last October.

Mayne, Buckie

Plaxton C53F-bodied Scania K93s K555 GSM and K777 GSM were sold to Yeates (dealer), Loughborough by July.

Meffan, Kirriemuir YT

ECW B29F-bodied Ford R1014 TRD 723N was sold in July to Greenhill, Alyth (non-PSV).

Midland Bluebird FB

All eight of the Wright Endurance B49F-bodied Scania L113CRLs 567-74 had entered service at Linlithgow depot by mid-August. 567/9/72-4 are registered M567/9 RMS, N572-4 VMS, and notable features of these buses are their improved seating and the provision of air conditioning.

Stirling bus station was closed on 9 July and demolished within the following two weeks. It has been replaced on a temporary basis on the former Menzies Motors site close to Craigs Roundabout to the south, and this arrangement will continue while a new bus station with high quality passenger facilities is being built as part of Phase 2 of the Thistle Shopping Centre, close to Stirling railway station. It is anticipated that the work will take about 18 months.

Moffat & Williamson, Gauldry

F255 BHF (*NXI 9007*), a Plaxton C46Ft-bodied Volvo B10M-60 previously Cumberland Motor Services 1, joined this fleet earlier in the year. Contrary to earlier impressions, some local bus service work has been retained by this firm, and an interesting development during the first week of August was the appearance of Optare Prisma demonstrator M925 TYG.

Newark, Kilmacolm

Another new operator, William Hughes trading as Newark Coaches, commenced a local service between Kilblain Street and Wren Road in Greenock with effect from 18 August. It operates on Mondays to Saturdays on a 40min frequency. B64 AOP, a Ford Transit with Carlyle B16F bodywork, has been purchased for this venture and painted into a light blue and cream livery.

Oban & District

Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards YSF 87S and ULS 323T were returned to Strathtay in July and June respectively.

Park, Hamilton

The latest crop of new owners reported for Volvo coaches sold by this firm comprises Limebourne, London (J688/9 LGA,*LSK 498, 500, J458/60 HDS*); Meon Valley, Moreton (F254 MGB, *LSK 508, F767 ENE*); Monetgrange, Nottingham (E965 CGA, *LSK 878, E648 UNE*); Nuttall, Penwortham (L746 YGE); and Smith, Sittingbourne (L649/55/8/60/3 ADS, *HSK 647/8/2/50/49*). Snell, Newton Abbott now owns Neoplan Skyliner C963 YFA (*18 XWC, C182 KET*).

Post Office

Two new vehicles to note are 4750003 (M229 WSG), an LDV 400-series fitted with a tail lift for wheelchair accessibility on the Linlithgow-Blackness/Maddiston service and 5760003 (M702 XSG), a Ford Mondeo 1.8 turbo diesel estate car on the Skerray-Tongue route.

With effect from 21 August a new circular service was introduced between Salen and Ulva Ferry on the island of Mull.

Prentice, West Calder

Jonckheere C50Ft-bodied Volvo B10M-60 F95 CBD was acquired in June ex-Classic, Annfield Plain and promptly re-registered PR 1787.

Pringle, Bearsden

NOC 407R is another former A1 Service MCW H43/33F-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE30ALR to join this fleet. Latterly numbered R977, it was rebuilt to semi open-top layout before entering service and has been repainted into the green Discovering Glasgow tours livery.

Rapson, Brora

Duple C53F-bodied Volvo B58 OIB 1085 (*RUT 758W, POI 9786, ODJ 578W*) was acquired by McGinn, Ballycastle last year, while Plaxton C41F-bodied Leyland Leopard HHA 185L is now out of use.

Rennie, Dunfermline

PIJ 601 (*C357 KEP, WCY 701*), a Neoplan N722/3 with Plaxton CH53/18Ct coachwork, was acquired in May ex-Hedingham & District L228.

Riverside, Paisley

Further to the August issue, latest reports indicate that there are only two TBP-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds, numbered M418/9 GUS.

Rogers, Peterhead

With effect from 28 July this firm has had the contract previously held by Smith, Cruden Bay to operate Aberdeen local service 27A between Guild Street, Kirkhill and Aberdeen Airport. DAF coaches previously used against Bluebird Buses on the Aberdeen/Peterhead corridor last winter are being used on this route.

Rowe, Muirkirk

N851/2 ASF are a pair of Alexander B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds which have replaced Dormobile-bodied 709Ds K91/2 RGA, now owned by McGill, Barrhead.

Simpson, Inverkip

After a lengthy absence from local bus service operation, this name reappears with a registration for a half hourly Monday to Saturday service in Greenock between Nicolson Street and Leven Road, effective from 7 August.

SMT FB

Coaches obtained on loan from May for the 1995 summer season comprised F1, 3 (F608/9 HGO), Van Hool C53F-bodied DAF SB2305DHS585s previously London Coaches DV8, 9; F6 (F646 OHD), Plaxton C51Ft-bodied DAF MB230LB615; and F7 (F242 RJX), similar but seating unconfirmed. The latter pair were previously used by the Cowie Group, London.

During late July and early August, Optare Sigma-bodied Dennis Lance demonstrator M21 UUA was on loan to this company and was used on Diamond services from Livingston depot. An Optare Prisma demonstrator has also been used and details will follow. Alexander Strider-bodied Volvo B10B M919 MRW was still being used at the end of June.

The latest vehicles reported to be in Grampian style livery include Leyland Olympian 113, Ailsa 153, Leyland Lion 183, Renault S56s 459/61/3, Optare MetroRiders O504/10/1/5/24, and Seddon Pennines 608/22/57. Leyland Olympian 129 is, however, still in the old livery contrary to the report in the August issue.

Alexander B21F-bodied Dodge S56s R401/4/6/7 were returned from their loan to Lothian Transit in May but R401/7, together with similar R415/7/25/30 (D415 ASF etc) were sold to Eastern Counties earlier this year and are now numbered RA424/6/1/2/5/3 respectively in that fleet. Dennis Dominators EE226 (MUT 226W) and EE285 (FUT 185V), with Marshall and East Lancs bodywork respectively, were returned to Leicester CityBus in June, while ECW-bodied Fleetlines DD67 (OSG 67V) and DD711 (KSX 711N) are now Lothian Transit 1167/11. Fleetline DD712 (KSX 712N), Ailsa VV781 (CSG 781S) and Seddons S614 (SSX 614V), S885 (GSX 885T), T5 (VFS 236V, *GCS 245, OSF 961V*) were all sold to Dunsmore (dealer), Larkhall in June.

Strathclyde Buses SB

Alexander Royale-bodied Volvo Olympians VO1, 2 have YN2RV18V3 and YN2RC16V3 chassis respectively, while Northern Counties-bodied examples VO3, 4 are H47/30F and have YN2RC16V3 chassis.

LOC105 (C211 UPD) is another Leyland Olympian ONTL11/2RSp with ECW CH45/24F bodywork to enter service this summer, having previously been Northumbria 356 prior to being acquired by SB Holdings last October. It has been allocated to Parkhead depot and is in SB Travel livery. Similar LOC103/4 are also reported to be CH45/24F and are allocated to Knightswood and Possilpark depots.

M113 SLS, the Wright Pathfinder-bodied Scania L113CRL Axcess-ultralow demonstrator, was on loan to this company for three weeks in August and was used from Larkfield depot on the 44 group of services. It was allocated fleetnumber L113 for its visit and departed on 21 August.

Plaxton Verde-bodied Scania saloon SS2 has rather surprisingly been repainted into the simplified version of SB Travel coach livery although it continues to be used on local bus services. AH44, 64 are another two Volvo Citybuses to receive the overall white rear end treatment in anticipation of an advertising livery, as described in the August issue.

As reported above, further vehicles transferred to the GCT fleet in July comprised Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlanteans LA1101/10/2 (TGE 820/9/31R), LA1124/6/31-3/5 (TGG 739/41/6-8/50R), and MCW Metroriders M98-100 (E195-7 BNS). Similar Atlanteans LA1043, 1136/40/2-4/7/8/50-2 were also loaned to GCT in July. MCW Metrorider M88 is now Kelvin Central 1049.

Strathtay YT

209 (G892 WML), a Renault S75 with Reeve Burgess DP29F bodywork previously London Buses RB22, arrived in June and has been allocated to Dundee. Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards 560/3 (YSF 87S, ULS 323T) were returned from loan by Oban & District in July and June respectively and are now in use at Arbroath.

With reference to last month's issue, MCW Metrobus 816 has been re-registered E36 LSL, not E32 LSL. Duple-bodied Leyland Tiger 426 has been repainted from the old Citylink livery into Strathtay Coaches colours, and reseated from C48Ft to C49Ft.

Dormobile B16F-bodied Freight Rover Sherpa 126 (D568 VBV) was withdrawn in June while Duple C49F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4Rs 529 (ASP 94T, *VLT 217, ULS 648T*) and 530 (ASP 240T, *VLT 221, ULS 649T*) were broken up by the company in July.

Stuart, Carluke

Since 23 July this firm has been operating subsidised services 56 between Motherwell and Shotts (Sundays only, hourly) and 353 between Hamilton and Coalburn (daily, up to hourly). Recent additions include Alexander B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D N846 ASF which was new in August; ECW H43/31F-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3/501 RAU 809R ex-Northern Bus, North Anston in August; and Alexander B25F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D G874 DSC ex-Vale, Manchester in May.

Tayside

Scott C24F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D H780 YYS and Wright B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D GBZ 7212 have been acquired, their last owner being Stark, Bridge of Weir. Fleetnumbers are not yet known.

With the eventual launch of smartcards on 26 July under the name of Flexi Fare Cards, appropriate lettering was applied to the offside of Ailsa 46 while Tayside Greyhound holidays are advertised on the nearside.

Tower, Gourock

Patrick and Elise Hogan, trading as Tower Coaches, commenced a local service on 7 August between Gourock Pierhead and Greenock, Container Way at the Tesco supermarket. It operates half hourly on Mondays to Saturdays but hourly in the evenings and on Sundays. Two vehicles reported with the company are D412 FRV and D505 MJA, both Robin Hood B19F-bodied Iveco 49.10s previously with Wilson, Gourock and now in a black and yellow livery.

Weir, Clydebank

YEV 313S, a Volvo-engined Leyland National demonstrator, was on loan to this company from Volvo (dealer), Warwick for several weeks during August.

Westerbus, Gairloch

UCK 926R, a Duple C53F-bodied Volvo B58-56, was acquired by Brown, Crawley in April.

Western Scottish ST

Alexander PS DP48F-bodied Volvo B10M-55s 506/7 (M869/71 ASW) have been transferred from A1 Service to this fleet, having been new to A1 in June. In view of the success of the Arran open-top bus service, another vehicle of this configuration has been obtained for use on that service in the shape of GHV 948N, a Park Royal O44/27D-bodied Leyland Fleetline CRL6 ex-Selkent DM948. It remains in full Selkent livery while another recent arrival, ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian 911, is in Stagecoach corporate livery.

Duple-bodied Leyland Tiger 174 (PSO 177W), already on loan from Bluebird Buses, has been loaned to Clyde Coast as a spare vehicle for the Clyde Coaster service. Park Royal-bodied Leyland Atlantean 812 and Alexander-bodied Dodge S56s 241-3/6/54 have been transferred to A1 Service to assist with additional work recently taken on.

Plaxton-bodied Dennis Dorchester 418 (B985 EGG,*WLT 364, B403 OSB*) was re-registered VLT 219 earlier this year. Two other Dorchesters, 142 (VLT 272, *B202 CGA*) and 421 (WLT 501, *D211 NCS*) were renumbered 421 and 121 respectively in July. Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10M-61s 194/5 have been reseated from C44Ft to C49F and C51F respectively.

Duple-bodied Volvo B10M-61 424 (WGB 834W, *WLT 416, NCS 114W*) became Selkent 3007 in March and Alexander-bodied Seddon Pennine 477 (DSD 977V) was sold to Cheltenham and Gloucester in July.

Westside, Greenock

E477 RAV, a Reeve Burgess C25F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D, has been acquired from Avondale, Greenock. A new service in Greenock between Kilblain Street and Wren Road was registered with effect from 4 August.

Whitelaw, Stonehouse

7994 WW is a Volvo B10M-62 with Van Hool C51F coachwork which was new in August.

Wilson, Gourock

GBZ 7213/4, 1991 Mercedes-Benz 811Ds with Wright B29F bodywork, have been acquired from the now-defunct Stark, Bridge of Weir fleet. Robin Hood-bodied Iveco 49.10s D412 FRV and D505 MJA have been sold to new operator Tower, Gourock.

Wilson, Rhu

From 3 July this firm commenced operation of the subsidised service in Helensburgh between Colquhoun Square and Churchill.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ashton Coaches, Bluebird Buses, C. Carberry, R. Carey, R. Clark, R. Crossan, M. Currie, C. Forbes, T. Hamilton, A. Hogg, S. Hulse, S. Little, D. Love, A. Macdonald, D. McGow, A. Macintosh, Midland Bluebird, B. Nicol, PSV Circle, Ride the Royal Mail Postbus, Strathclyde Buses, I. Wallace, R. Walter, D. Watson, Western Scottish, P. Williamson, and C. Wilson have all contributed news this month and their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

Group codes

BB — British Bus
FB — First Bus
SB — Strathclyde Bus
ST — Stagecoach Holdings
YT — Yorkshire Traction

Competing with the Coastline 535 is what began as Coastlink 535, on which is seen AA Northern Counties-bodied DAF M630 RCP. See 'Scottish Column'. MURDOCH CURRIE

Reports on Irish vehicles to be sent to: **R. C. Ludgate, 253 Lower Braniel Road, Belfast BT5 7NR**

IRISH MAJOR OPERATORS

Ulsterbus

Further orders for Volvos have been placed. They include the 10 Alexander Ultra-bodied Volvo B10Ls for Derry City services reported in August, and also call for 30 more Volvo B10M-62 express coaches with Plaxton Première bodywork and another four B10M-62s with Plaxton Excalibur bodywork. Also ordered are 30 Mercedes-Benz 709Ds with Alexander (Belfast) bodywork, some of which may be allocated to the Flexibus fleet. Incidentally a check has revealed that the recent Alexander-bodied Volvo B10Ms are in fact B10M-60s, not B10M-62s, though the Plaxton-bodied ones are B10M-62.

A most unusual secondhand acquisition arrived at Duncrue Street on 10 August. It is Leyland-DAB/35-69/4 articulated bus with Roe 54-seat bodywork, ex-British Airways BU307 (RLN 231W). It is allocated to the driving school for training for articulated buses and is numbered 2999. Before coming here it had its centre nearside and two offside doors removed by Ensignbus. Other, less exotic, used acquisitions are Mercedes-Benz 609Ds PIW 7431 (*G834 YLK*) with Reeve Burgess C18F bodywork, ex-Hertz Car Rentals, PIW 5916 (*F536 DWE*) with Reeve Burgess Beaver B25F bodywork ex-Ken Rose, Broadway and 811D/Concept Coachcraft B27F van conversion SIB 4081 (*E633 UYS*), ex-Poots Coach Hire, Tanderagee. All three came via Chambers, Moneymore, and will be numbered 64-6 in the Ulsterbus fleet.

Another Mark 1 Goldliner Alexander TE-type-bodied Leyland Tiger returned to service on 20 July after refurbishment; 525 (PXI 5525) is at Coleraine.

Sad to relate further attacks by terrorists have resulted in the loss of more vehicles in the Province, mainly through arson. On 20 July Leyland Tigers 1083/4 (KXI 2083/4) were totally destroyed at Carnlough, while on 29 July Leyland Leopard 335 (BXI 335) was destroyed at Oxford Street depot. Then on 7 August an arson attack on Ballymena depot resulted in the loss of Leyland Tiger 1222 (NXI 4222) while Goldliner Mk IV Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10M-62 1564 (DAZ 1564) suffered extensive fire damage, but may be rebodied. Three days later Leyland Tigers 1020 (JXI 1020) and 1134 (LXI 1134) were completely destroyed whilst parked overnight at Castlederg, Co Tyrone. Further losses occurred as the result of an arson attack on Armagh depot on 12 August — they were Leyland Tiger 364 (DXI 3364), Alexander (Belfast) Q-type-bodied Volvo B10M 1513 (DAZ 1513) and Goldliner Mk III Wright-bodied Leyland Tiger 1422 (WXI 4422), which were write-offs, while Leyland Tigers 346 (DXI 3346) and 596 (RXI 5596, *B308 UNB*), the latter with Van Hool Alizée bodywork, were extensively damaged but will probably be repaired.

Buses previously destroyed and now sold to Beattie, Hillsborough, for scrap during July and August are Leyland Tigers 394 (FXI 394) 1077/83/4/97 (KXI 2077/83/4/97) and Volvo B10M Goldliner Mk IVs 1543/81 (DAZ 1543, EAZ 2581). Also sold for scrap are Bristol LH6L 1637 (FOI 1637), Bedford YRQ 1716 (LOI 1716) and Bristol RELL 2204 (POI 2204). 1637 was the last of its type; latterly used as a towing vehicle it was one of 100 delivered new in 1973 with Alexander (Belfast) B45F bodywork, 1601-1700 (FOI 1601-1700). However there are still two Bristol LHs in the fleet, 1892/3 (SWS 774S, GPN 301N), which were acquired secondhand in August 1992.

Because of the ongoing arson attacks a number of buses were relicensed on 10 July; they are Leyland Leopards 126 (ROI 126) at Newcastle and 302/6 (XOI 3302/6), 328 (BXI 328) at Newry. Meanwhile 184 (VOI 184), 219/20 (WOI 2219/20), 290 (AXI 290) were relicensed from 1 August to meet extra commitments at Magherafelt.

Leyland Tiger 1043 (KXI 1043) appeared in service during August in a very attractive overall advertising livery for Tango orange drink ex-Smoke Free Campaign, and 1165 (MXI 3165) in overall advertising livery for Gino's Fashions moved from Ballymena to Belfast (Great Victoria Street) on 1 August in exchange for similar 1163.

Citybus

Citybus has not suffered losses to the extent that Ulsterbus has, but Bristol RELL 2442 (WOI 2442) is another vehicle damaged. Because of the vehicles damaged recently a number of RELLs delicensed at Falls Road for the school holidays, 2345 (UOI 2345), 2514/28 (XOI 2514/28) and 2525 (AXI 2525) were relicensed and returned to service.

Leyland Tigers 2660/80 (SXI 2660, VXI 2680) at Newtownabbey are in service in full Citybus Express rainbow livery for Newtownabbey-Belfast services 1A/1B. Bristol RELL 2534 has not lost its Buspak panels after all.

Leyland Tiger 2627 (NXI 4627) is another in overall advertising livery for Heinz Baked Beans while 2635 (NXI 4635) advertises Heinz Tomato Ketchup.

Dublin Bus

Delivery of new Volvo Olympians resumed after the annual holidays at Alexander (Belfast) with RH238-41 to Donnybrook, all in normal fleet livery. The final 14 buses of this order will go to Summerhill.

Further Bombardier withdrawals are KD43/5-7 (43 JZL etc) at Donnybrook and KD51 (51 JZL) at Conyngham Road. There are also withdrawals of some of the last remaining Van Hool-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68s at Summerhill, involving D687 (687 ZO) and D838 (838 NIK).

At Phibsborough Eurocoach-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D ME29 (94 D 37029) now completes the fleet for City Imp service 134, City-Finglas, ME23-31, releasing ME17 for return to Conyngham Road for route 123 which now has ME1-18, 21/2. A new order has been placed for Eurocoach B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811s, likely to be ME36-55 (95 D 33036-55) for a revision of routes centred on Clontarf.

A further minibus scheme is in train for the Bray area, expected to be introduced during September. It is gathered Alexander-bodied Mercedes-Benz minibuses MA10/1/4/6/7/9, currently stored in the former Localink green and cream livery once used by Metroriders in the Tallaght area, are to be used.

Bus Eireann

The Dublin-Belfast Express service, operated jointly with Ulsterbus, was augmented last June due to much increased traffic, no doubt one of the many benefits of the peace process. There are now seven departures each way on weekdays and three on Sundays.

Following the loan at Cork of Mercedes-Benz/Leicester ML20 from Dublin Bus at Donnybrook, further minibus plans are being formulated for Waterford; ML16-9 are likely to be sent on loan from Dublin Bus. Alexander-bodied Leyland Tigers TE16, 29 have been transferred from Dundalk to Sligo and Ballina, Plaxton-bodied DAF PD20 from Waterford to Broadstone in exchange for PD39 and Leyland Tigers PL67, 76 while PD30 has gone to Broadstone from Dundalk.

Schoolbuses withdrawn are Bedford VAS5 SS735 (735 ZI), SB5s SS529/51/71 (UZU 529 etc), SS648/87 (648/87 Z) and Leyland Leopard PSU3/4Rs CS136, 232 (EZH 136, 232) at Limerick, SB5s SS212 (EZL 212), 507 (PZO 507), SS538 (UZU 538) at Galway and Leopard PSU3/4R CS149 (EZH 149) at Ballina.

Further ex-Singapore Bus Services Volvo B57s for the school bus fleet are:

Fleet No	Irish registration	SBS No	Allocation
VS196	82 D 2533	SBS4814	Athlone
VS197	82 D 2532	SBS4811	Longford
VS198	82 D 2531	SBS4828	Longford
VS199	82 D 2549	SBS4817	Longford
VS200	82 D 2548	SBS4810	Longford
VS201	82 D 2547	SBS4827	Longford
VS202	82 D 2546	SBS4824	Limerick
VS203	82 D 2545	SBS4813	Limerick
VS204	82 D 2530	SBS4815	Limerick
VS205	82 D 2529	SBS4829	Limerick
VS206	82 D 2528	SBS4823	Limerick
VS207	82 D 2544	SBS4830	Limerick
VS208	82 D 2543	SBS4825	Waterford
VS209	82 D 2527	SBS4820	Waterford
VS210	82 D 2542	SBS4818	Waterford
VS211	82 D 2525	SBS4832	Waterford
VS212	82 D 2541	SBS4831	Sligo
VS213	82 D 2540	SBS4816	Sligo
VS214	82 D 2524	SBS4819	Ballina
VS215	82 D 2550	SBS4822	Galway
VS216	82 D 2523	SBS4821	Galway
VS217	82 D 2567	SBS4826	Tralee
VS218	82 D 2522	SBS4812	Tralee
VS219	83 D 3677	SBS4835H	Limerick
VS220	83 D 3696	SBS4833M	Limerick
VS221	83 D 3697	SBS4834K	Limerick
VS222	83 D 3699	SBS4837C	Waterford
VS223	83 D 3698	SBS4836E	Waterford
VS224	83 D 3700	SBS4838A	Athlone

Also received but not yet registered are VS225-8, allocated to Athlone, VS229/30 to Galway, VS232/3 to Sligo, VS234/5 to Tralee, VS236/7 to Limerick and VS238 to Waterford.

IRISH INDEPENDENTS

Britton, Artigarvan

Volvo B58-61/Irizar C49F SWW 157W was hijacked during civil disturbances in Strabane on 26 May and set on fire. It was a write-off.

Chambers, Moneymore

Jonckheere C51Ft-bodied Volvo B10M-62 M335 KRY was new in July. Recent disposals are Mercedes-Benz 609D/Reeve Burgess B25F 615 XGD to Magee, Carrigans and similar PIW 5916, 7431 (the latter C18F) to Ulsterbus, qv.

Lakeland Tours, Lisbellaw

Last April Ford R1014/Plaxton C35F 902 DCV (*FCX 578W*) passed to Hughes-DAF, Gomersal, and Plaxton C53F-bodied Bedford YMT WCG 816V was withdrawn.

Logan, Dunloy

Recent acquisitions are Plaxton C50F-bodied Volvo B10M-60s J754/5 CWT, ex-Wallace Arnold. Disposals are Plaxton C53F-bodied Volvo B10M-61s NDZ 7754 (*B208 RRU*) to Moore Mossley and NDZ 7763 (*B872 XWR, 7820 WA, B163 XWR*) to McGlynn, Letterkenny, while C51F-bodied Volvo B10M-60 SDZ 4287 (*G118 XRE*) was withdrawn following an accident in July.

Lough Swilly

Alexander (Belfast)-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3B/4R DOI 3453 has been re-registered 71 DL 510.

Poots Coach Hire, Tanderagee

Bova EL26-581 C53F MDS 216Y has been acquired from Chambers, Moneymore while Mercedes-Benz 811D/Concept Coachcraft B27F SIB 4081 (*E633 UYS*) passed to Ulsterbus via Chambers.

White, Keady

Duple C45F-bodied Bedford YRQ OSK 354V has passed to London Unit of Swanley.

Far right: **In use on the Cork City Tour by Bus Eireann is this Van Hool-bodied Leyland Atlantean open-topper, D707, clearly lettered for the service.** CHRISTINA CURITS

Right **Also in use on sightseeing work is this ex-Southdown 'Queen Mary' Leyland PD3, ZV 1461 of Lally, Spiddal. It is used in Galway and was originally 415 DCD.** PAUL WIGAN

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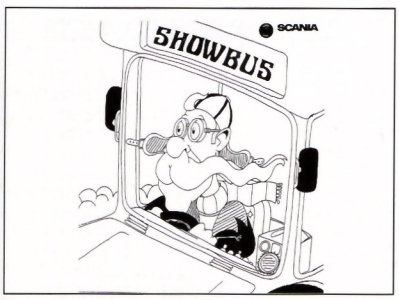

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EVENTS

MUSEUM OF TRANSPORT BOYLE STREET, CHEETHAM, MANCHESTER

0161-205 2122

Details S. Lord

MAYNES RUNNING DAY
15th October 1995
DON'T MISS THIS ONE OFF EVENT

Vehicles: S.H.M.D. 70, ASHTON 44, M.C.T.D. 3245 Plus Maynes Twins, Regent 8859 & 8860. **PLUS** Other Museum Vehicles and Guest Buses Welcome (Subject to availability)

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Maynes Vehicles on Photographic Display 10.00 to 13.00. Both Vehicles will be on the 13.00 Service to Audenshaw and Droylsden returning via Maynes Garage. Intensive Bus Service on Maynes Routes from 10.00-20.00 hrs. Running In The Dark. Photo Stops En route. All Services from Museum, Stevenson Sq. on to Droylsden and Audenshaw returning from Depot Visit (Vehicles on Display) and back to Museum. **Museum Entry and Maynes Garage £2.00 Adult-£1.25 Conc.**

THIRD READING BUSES OPEN DAY & RALLY

Sunday 29 October 10 am-5 pm

- Reading Buses Forbury Engineering Works open to the Public
- Visiting vehicles Vintage & Modern
- Numerous Enthusiasts' Sales Stands
- Bus trips around beautiful Berkshire
- Special Bus Service to view Newbury Buses Garage
- Free Shuttle Service every 10 minutes linking Forbury Depot with Reading Town Centre & Rail Station—operated by Reading Buses and visiting vehicles
- Refreshments & Other Attractions Available All Day

—Forbury Depot, Kenavon Drive, The Forbury, Reading—

'Just behind Toys 'R' Us'

Reading Transport Enthusiasts' Club

READING Buses

Entry Forms & Details: SAE to RTEC 52 Coventry Rd, Reading RE1 3NE

Over 50 entrants last year

CAMBERLEY TRANSPORT ENTHUSIASTS' FAIR

Sunday, 12th. November, 1995 11.00am - 4.00pm

Civic Hall, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey. (Turn off A30 at Whites Garage)

A pleasant spacious venue, with ample parking and a short walk from Camberley Station. An exciting event featuring stalls buying, selling & exchanging a vast assortment of transport related items. Books, magazines, posters, timetables, postcards, videos, models old & new, tickets and all kinds of memorabilia should be featured. Up to 65 tables of collectable items.

Admission: Adults 80p Senior Citizens & Children 40p

Enquires & Stall Bookings: Keith Manning: Epsom (01372) 725063 (eves).

SATURDAY 21st OCTOBER

THE MID KENT COLLECTORS TOY FAIR

Agricultural Hall, Maidstone Market

A super established Model Bus Swapmeet for readers of *'BUSES'*

From 09.00 -Admission £1.00

Phone 01622 753783 for further details.

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announces the return of its ANNUAL RALLY as

TRANSPERIENCE RALLY 95

SUNDAY 15th OCTOBER

at the

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Free bus service from Bradford interchange

Entry forms and details (SAE please)

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KIDDERMINSTER ROAD/RAIL RALLY 95

Sunday, October 8th

Kidderminster Town Railway Station

10.30 a.m.-5.00 p.m.

OVER 200 VEHICLES ON DISPLAY

Free Vintage Bus Service to Bewdley

Admission £1.50 Adults; £1.00 Children/OAP's

For Further Details Telephone (01684) 569139 19.30-22.00

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* Bus link with preserved and modern buses.
* Road run around the island.
* Display of cars & commercials adjacent to museum.
* Large Sales Stall area inside museum.

Entry forms from:
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Essex SS7 4AQ.

Sales Stands:
P.Wise, Transport Museum,
105 Point Road, Canvey Island, Essex.

NORTHERN TRANSPORT COLLECTORS FAIR

10.30 am to 3.30 pm

Saturday 7th, October

Rothwell Methodist Church, Butcher Lane, Rothwell, Nr Leeds. - M1/M62 Junction.

The indoor event for railway, bus collectors in the North. All types of books, paperwork, photographs, tickets, relics etc.

Admission - 80p

Enquiries / Stalls - M G Burbage-Atter or Transmac.

Tel 0113 2824986 or 0113 2825349.

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LIVERPOOL STREET TRANSPORT BAZAAR, Saturday 23 September, 09.30 - 17.00. books, postcards, diecast models, videos, collectables, ephemera...Upper concourse, admission free. Tel: 0181 595 9029.

DEAN FOREST RAILWAY, Lydney, Glos. Annual Rally and Transport Extravaganza, Sunday 15 October. Full details write: DFR, 59 Claverham Road, Yatton, Bristol, BS19 4LD. or Tel: 01934 833879 (8pm-10pm only please).

EASTERN COUNTIES 65th ANNIVERSARY RUNNING DAY at Cambridge, Sunday 14th July 1996. Owners of former ECOC vehicles invited to attend. Please contact. K. Worland, 25, Alpha Terrace, Trumpington, Cambridge. CB2 2HS.

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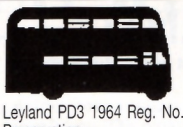

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Leyland PD3 1964 Reg. No. AED 26B. Manual gear box. Photograph of this bus in Buses Focus Bus Preservation.
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PHONELINES

THE BUSES HOTLINE on 01891 448667 for all the latest news. Updated every Monday and Thursday. Calls charged at 39p/minute cheap rate and 49p/minute at all other times.

VIDEOS

NEW VIDEOS 1995 VHS - 1, 'Hong Kong Island' (C.M.B. Citybus Trams). 2, 'Kowloon' (K.M.B. Citybus). 3, 'New Territories' (K.M.B. Citybus, LRT, NLB). All include ferry/harbour scenes, railways. All tapes 90 minutes length. £16.00 each. £28.00 for two, £36.00 all three. From Oakes-Garnett, 194 Moorcroft Road, Manchester, M23 0AJ. Tel: 0161 998 6984.

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- Display of buses on Garage forecourt at Kingston
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NB: Certain vehicles will be limited in passenger capacity. KOD is organised independently by the Kingston RF Group.
For further information please telephone Cobham Bus Museum: 01932 864078
Saturdays and Sundays ONLY

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Maynes Running Day - ***15 October 1995*** To celebrate 75 years of A. Mayne and son. Vintage Bus Service from the Museum to Audenshaw and Droylsden via Stevenson Square (2 routes). Tours of Maynes Garage. Subject to availability vehicles include Maynes Twins (Regents 8859 and 8860), Scania in old livery, S.H,M,D, Atkinson 70, Ashton 44, MCTD and North Western buses. Evening running. Guest vehicles very welcome for display at Museum, Maynes and en-route. Photographic poses and opportunities at this one-off event.

Christmas Transport Festival - ***2/3 December 1995.*** Stalls and Usual Attractions. Plans in motion to link up with a second local event. Details G. Turnbull.

Spring Transport Festival *30-31 March 1996.*

Lancashire United Transport Weekend *18-19 May 1996.* In association with G.M. Buses (North) an exhibition of all things L.U.T. at the Museum **PLUS** on Sunday only an Open Day at G.M. Buses (North) Atherton Depot. Vintage bus service between the two venues. The event is open to L.U.T. buses and on Sunday vehicles that operated in L.U.T. territory would be especially welcome for rallies at both sites. **Many surprises** being planned for this event.

If you would like to become a member of The Museum Society and join our active members please contact R. Cotton.

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September	PBP Club Price
2,500 limited edition 'Showbus' Duxford 1995 Special Daimler CVG6/MCW Orion - Coventry	£14.95
October	
Leyland PDR1 Atlantean - Portsmouth	£11.25
AEC Regent V-MCW - South Wales	£11.25
Leyland PD2/1 Lowbridge - East Midland	£11.25
Bedford SB-Duple Vega - MacBraynes	£11.25
Bedford OB-Duple - Grey Cars	£11.25
Leyland TS8 Tiger - East Midland	£11.25
AEC 8-Wheel Box van - Bouts	£11.25
November	
A New Double Deck Bus Casting (to be announced)	£11.25
AEC Regent V-MCW Orion - Samuel Ledgard	£11.25
Bristol FLF-Cambus	£11.25
Bedford SB-Duple Vega - Premier Watford	£11.25
Bedford OB-Duple - Eastern Counties	£11.25
Leyland PD2-Highbridge - Portsmouth	£11.25
AEC Articulted Box Van - Hitchmans Dairies	£11.25

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	PBP Club Price
LANCASHIRE HOLIDAY SET Leyland PD2/MCW Orion - Bolton *and* **Leyland Leopard** - Lancashire United	£22.50
CAPITAL AND HIGHLANDS SET LEYLAND PD2/MCW Orion - Edinburgh *and* **AEC Reliance** - Macbraynes	£22.50
BRIDGES AND SPIRES SET AEC Regent II/Weymann - Tynemouth & District **AND Bristol L5G** Durham District Services	£22.50

Please send large SAE for details of PBP Collectors Club and Non Club prices

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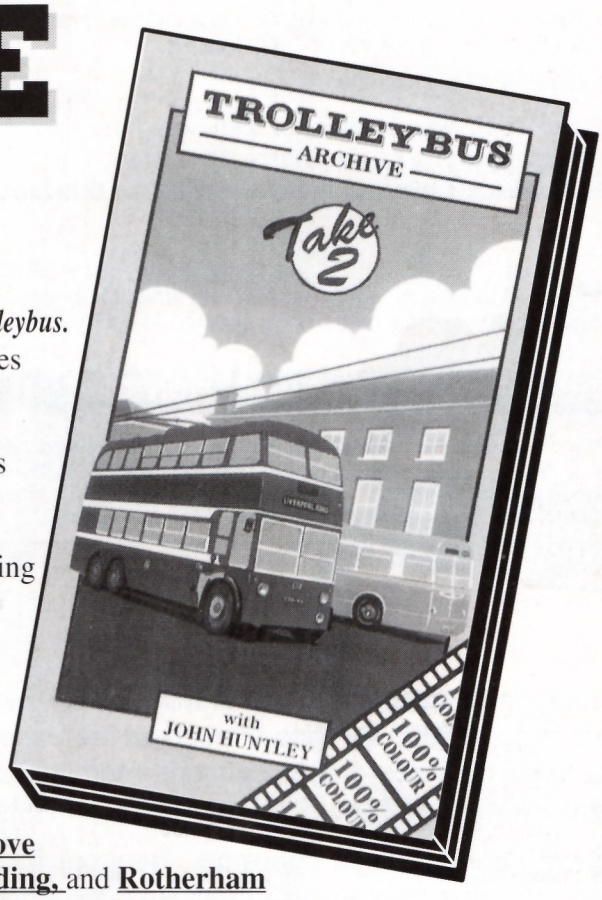

The second in our popular series of Archive Programmes on the Trolleybus.
This unique collection of films, shot during the 1960's, comes from the archives of Peter Goddard and is **all** in **Glorious Colour.** Look back with affection at parts of the British Trolleybus system as we describe the main features, services and vehicles, as well as some of their peculiarities, on our journey back in time.
The first section of the programme looks at 'Strangers' running in unfamiliar places.
We have some remarkable footage of preserved vehicles touring towns and cities in which they would never usually have been seen. **LT260,** which is possibly one of the best preserved vehicles in the country, is seen in **Bournemouth** and **Glasgow's** single deck vehicle, **TSB 21,** is seen running in **Cardiff.**
Other visitors represented in this section are **Brighton & Hove 6340** in **Teeside,-Huddersfield 631** and **Belfast 168** in **Reading,** and **Rotherham 44** and **Portsmouth 313** in **Bournemouth.**
The second section starts with the closure of the **Maidstone** system and goes on to visit **Walsall, Wolverhampton, Derby** and **Bradford.** The section ends with the last day of operation in **Huddersfield.**

Running time 60 minutes. Written and narrated by John Huntley

- - - -

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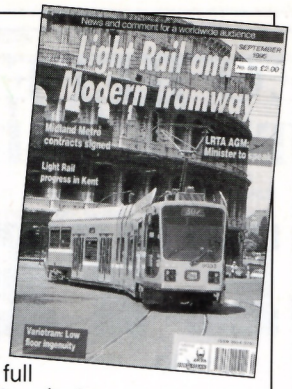
Light Rail and Modern Tramway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Midland Metro contracts signed
LRTA AGM: Minister to
Light Rail progress in Kent
Variotram: Low floor ingenuity

SHEFFIELD SUPERTRAM opens its latest extension this month. Where does it go from here? *LR&MT* has the full technical specification of this important project.

Keep in touch with all the exciting developments all over the UK and worldwide in this important magazine.

The October 1995 issue also includes:

- **Blackpool: New bodies for 'Balloon' cars?.**
- **Lille: Another VAL extension approved.**
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"If your own company's insurances fall due for renewal later this year you should benefit from the soft market conditions which have developed during 1995. More specifically, premium rates are falling in some cases by up to 40%, and market capacity is growing wlth an increasing number of Insurers and Lloyd's Syndicates looking to underwrite good quality, well managed fleets.

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For further information please contact Peter Gomersall or Dermot Hanafin at Belmont International on 01732 - 459379.

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BRITISH BUSES SINCE 1945

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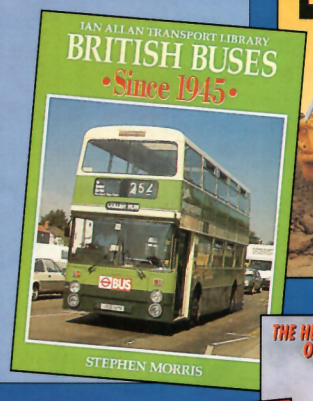
By Geoff Lumb ISBN: 0711023476, 9.25in x 6.75in, Cased, £14.99

A thorough examination of the history of the trolleybus in Britain and those British-built trolleybuses that were exported from the angle of the manufacturer. A detailed history of the trolleybus builders of Britain.



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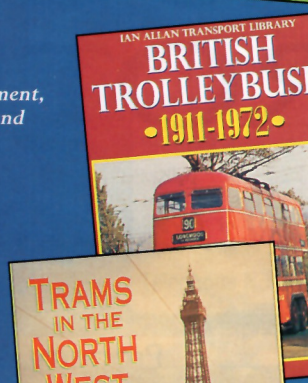

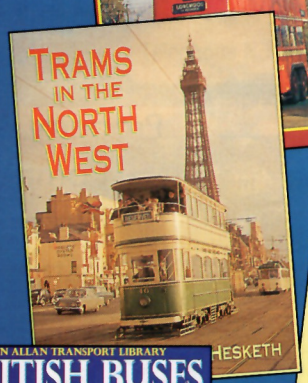

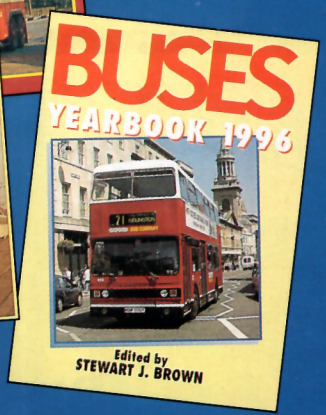

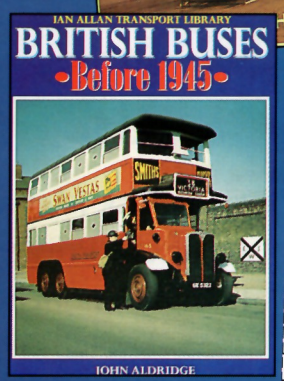

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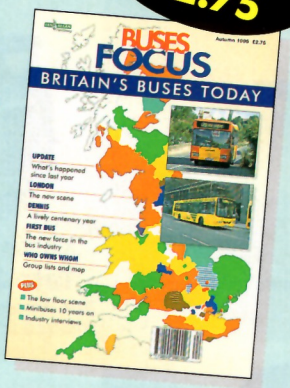

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- An interview with Alan Westwell, now GMB North, on whether big single-deckers are the answer
- First Bus - an interview with chief executive Moir Lockhead about the new amalgamation of Badgerline and GRT
- Ten years of minibuses, including some 'historic' material chronicling the rise and 'fall' of the minibus, and how its role and form has developed in that time
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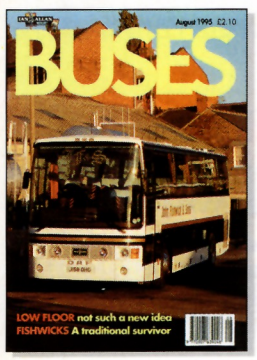

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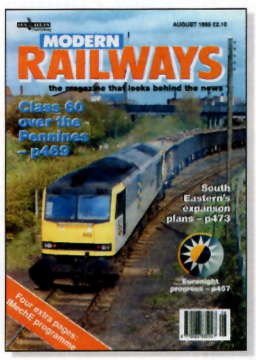

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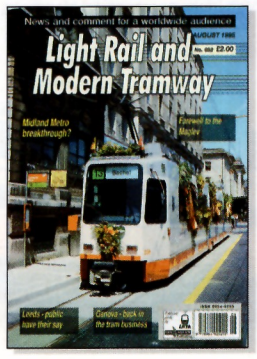

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Bedford OB Coach – 20102 ☐

Southern National (Royal Blue)

In the attractive Royal Blue livery Fleet No. 1433 (LTA909) is on route to Swanage. This model will complement our MW coach.

Atkinson Articulated Box Van – 19402 ☐

Tate & Lyle

This attractive model will make a welcome addition to the model set released in 1990.

RTL Provincial – 11109 ☐

O.K. Travel Services

An ex London Transport vehicle, JXN 356 is on route to Newfield, just North of Bishop Auckland.

A.E.C. Routemaster – 15617 ☐

Stagecoach "East London"

Adapted from the London Transport livery, RM1527 (527 CLT) is also used in BBC's "Eastenders" programme.

Leyland National – 17203 ☐

Yorkshire Terrier

A modern livery on the long body Fleet No. 34 (AWT 702 S) is on route 10 to Parson Cross. The side grill indicates the presence of a Volvo engine.

Bedford SB Duple Vega – 18707 ☐

Stevensons

In this extremely attractive livery, 599 LRE proudly displays Stevensons in the front bumper destination box.

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Daimler CVG6 – 19804 ☐

Coventry Transport

In this very popular livery, Fleet No. 211 (SKV 211) is on route 20 to Bedworth and carries adverts for Atkinsons Ales and Sellrights Fashion Shop.

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